ENTERTAINMENT / I1
Is Iza Calzado ready for her Hollywood close-up?

WORLD / A32
Kasparov arrested in police crackdown on anti-Kremlin protests

LIFESTYLE / C1
Classical artists band together for Earth Day concert

SPORTS / A34
Harbour-RP five overwhelm Indons, nail Seaba Champions Cup

EXCLAMATION POINT: Filipino boxing idol Manny Pacquiao delivers the final blow to Mexican challenger Jorge Solis for convincing victory in the eighth round in San Antonio, Texas.

Pacquiao unites Pinoys

People's champ bucks cut, knocks out Mexican

By Roy Luarca

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS—PHILIPPINE Manny Pacquiao survived a hellacious first round to knock out the game but very Mexican Jorge Solis in the eighth round in San Antonio, Texas.

Wounded by an accidental headbutt by Jorge Solis in the fifth round, Pacquiao turned into a crowd-pleasing machine and went on

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Garci blamed for few absentee voters

By Miko Dizon

THE GHOST OF THE "HELLO, GARCI" SCANDAL which marred the 2004 presidential election continues to haunt overseas absentee voters to this day.

Many overseas Filipino workers who registered for this election appeared to have lost their enthusiasm for participating in this year's election exercise.

Ironically, they're Mr. Garci's fault, according to Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano who ruled out any last-minute effort by Comelec officials to encourage more Filipinos to register.

Garcillano, the second overseas absentee voting executive director of the Center for Migrant Advocacy (CFMA), during the canvassing of votes for the 2004 polls, described Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano was ruled "Hello, Garci" by President Macapagal-Arroyo about alleged rigging the results.

On Monday, the second overseas absentee voting executive director of the Center for Migrant Advocacy (CFMA), during the canvassing of votes for the 2004 polls, described Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano was ruled "Hello, Garci" by President Macapagal-Arroyo about alleged rigging the results.

"The news about final (ballots) from said (it) not stopping them to register now," she said.

Sana said that most absentee voters were updated on political events in the Philippines.

"The news about final (ballots) from said (it) not stopping them to register now," she said.

In fact, it was only a few days before April 14 that "it began to dawn on them" that the OAV was to start on Barcelona, Sana said.

Moreover, Sana said most absentee voters were more interested in presidential elections, which also explains the high turnout not only in the registration for the 2004 polls, but for the actual voting as well.

For the May midterm elections, absentee voters will only vote for 12 senators and a party-list representative to represent a marginalized sector in the House of Representatives.

Sana said that most OFWs, such as Ate Gemelin, believe in Makabayan's constituency, which means the 20,000+ name subregister of their work to personally register at the embassies and consulates.

She said the OAV registration at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and at the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration prior to their departure from the Philippines had helped in encouraging more OFWs to participate in the elections.

"Only a little over 100,000 Filipinos registered to be able to vote this year, compared to the first time in 2003 wherein there were more than 364,000 who registered to be able to participate in the 2004 presidential elections," Sana said.

There are a little over 500,000 registered absentee voters this year.

As of 5 p.m. yesterday, a total of 7,810 Filipinos overseas had cast their votes at the Comelec main office in Intramuros, Manila, and 64 posts in United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Jordan, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Vatican, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, Spain, Portugal, Andorra, Monaco, Ireland, United Kingdom, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia-Montenegro, Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Mongolia, China, Japan, South Korea, North Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, East Timor, Papua New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, Micronesia, Guam, Palau, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Cook Islands, French Polynesia, Pitcairn Islands, Easter Island, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Belize, Mexico, Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Anguilla, Montserrat, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Aruba, Netherlands Antilles, Curaçao, Bonaire, Saba, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten, Saint Martin, Saint Barthélemy, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, Greenland, Canada, United States, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Bahamas, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Anguilla, Montserrat, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Aruba, Netherlands Antilles, Curaçao, Bonaire, Saba, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten, Saint Martin, Saint Barthélemy, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, Greenland, Canada, United States, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, Bahamas

Monsod raps Congress over party-list law

By Miko Dizon

A PARTY-LIST NOMINEE-TURNED-CRITIC from the ranks of the marginalized sector it seeks to represent has Congress spanking mad.

The idea of the Constitution, with respect to sectoral groups, is that the sectoralized conglomerate or party-list ... [illegible] ... from the ranks of that sector," Monsod said in the launch of a new election watchdog composed of lawyers, paralegals and law students who will monitor the canvassing of votes in election precincts.

Monsod, now an advocate of political and electoral reform, added, "The whole idea of party-list representation is that like-minded sectors have their own voice, [and is] not speaking through [their] banner or a self-canvassing advocate of the sector. It should be] the sector itself."

This opinion was counter to that of incumbent Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. who said in another media briefing that advocates of party-list representation could be nominated as party-list representatives.

Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento had also expressed the belief that Republic Act No. 7941, or the Party-List System Law, was "flawed" in some provisions, including the qualifications governing who could represent the "marginalized or underrepresented sector."

On this point, Monsod said: "When the law is vague, you decide [based] on the spirit of the Constitution."

Section 5 of RA 7941 requires that nominees for party-list representatives should be: A natural born citizen, a registered voter, a resident of the Philippines for not less than one year immediately preceding the day of the election, able to read and write, at least 25 years old on the day of the election, and a bona fide member of the party or organization at least 90 days before the day of the election.

Mike A's illness brings awareness to Filipinos

By Christian V. Esguerra

FIRST HE HEART ENCAMPAIGN. Actress's husband, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, who undergoing two complicated heart operations this Monday. A spokesman for the ailing husband into a nearby hospital confirming of reason & pass.

Even before the doctors in the emergency room could come up with an initial diagnosis, the woman in her 30s exhibited heart failure.

"Could it be an abdominal aortic aneurysm?" she asked.

The following day, the same ER admitted a man, also in his 30s, with a similar complaint. He, too, found he had the same life-threatening condition.

A battery of tests subsequently showed both patients did not have an aneurysm. What they had was genetic, a less serious disease characterized by inflammation of the stomach walls.

But only did America's battle-tested damaged media when big headlines for about a week—it also uncovered the Filipino [illegible] role in [illegible] medicine.

When in the past, a doctor-scholar was nothing more than [illegible] [illegible] Filipino now talk of "abdominal aortic aneurysm" (AAA) or "aortic dissection."

"Filipinos have become more aware of these conditions because of what happened to the First Gentleman," Dr. Lulgen Tuazon, director of the Philippine Heart Center (PHC), told the Inquirer last night.

Until the delicate surgery was performed on Arroyo, Tuazon said public awareness of this type of [illegible] was "zero."

Knowledge of the ailment was limited to medical reports like Tuazon, a leading cardiovascular surgeon, and patients diagnosed with the problem.

Never mind if the PHC would, on the average, admit a patient with an [illegible] monthly, can't be sure.

But because of the First Gentleman's condition, he said Filipinos were taking notice.

Just last Sunday, at least 20 patients came to Tuazon's clinic and inquired about AAA. Many of them were between 70 and 80 years old.

"It's really good that people are becoming more aware of this problem," he said.

According to Tuazon, AAA is a degenerative disease usually affecting the elderly.

An aneurysm is a bulge in a blood vessel, much like a bulge on an over-inflated inner tube, according to the website of the American Heart Association.

It can hit the aorta, the biggest artery in the body, and depending on the part affected, can be either an "abdominal aneurysm" or a "thoracic [illegible] aneurysm."

While the exact cause of AAA isn't clear, it is often blamed on atherosclerosis or the hardening of the arteries.

Comelec sets hearing on polling firms

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS WILL hear this week the petition filed by a party-list group questioning the members of current undertaker by the Social Weather Stations and Pulse Asia Inc.

Abalada Guro, an educators' group, wants the Comelec to bar SWS and Pulse Asia to reveal their survey procedures and to reveal the entities commissioning such undertakings.

"The published surveys affect the candidacies of individuals and parties by creating a bandwagon effect in favor of certain candidates, greatly undermining the chances of those who are trailing in the polls," said Abalada Guro president Antonio Alcantara in the petition filed with the Comelec on March 29.

The Comelec has scheduled a hearing on the matter on April 17 at 10 a.m.

On March 26, the senatorial candidates of the Ellening Bagong Lipunan led by lawyer Oliver Lozano asked the Comelec to stop SWS from conducting surveys, questioning the polling firm's credibility and political persuasions.

Genuine Opposition senatorial candidate Atty. Orlando also lambasted the SWS saying he lost his seat in one poll after he refused to submit to its surveys.

In a recent television interview, SWS president Dr. Mahar Mangahas said, "The surveys do not have any sponsors. We get revenue from different sources but these surveys are not commissioned by anyone."

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Commutation of minors' prison sentences urged

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE AND WELFARE Council has urged the Public Attorney's Office to seek the commutation of the sentences and the transfer of 24 juvenile offenders who are currently imprisoned in the national penitentiary and other penal colonies.

JJWC program secretariat head Ilee said the council had asked PAO to file the motions for commutation and transfer with the respective trial courts in accordance with the provisions of the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006.

The act provides a separate system for dealing with children who have been found guilty of committing crimes.

Since 1994, 38 minors have been meted out the death penalty. Of those, two have been set free while the rest were still languishing in overcrowded prisons together with hardened criminals, according to JJWC.

Based on their birth certificates as cleared by the Philippine Statistics Authority, a confluence of nongovernment agencies helping children in conflict with the law, three were aged 15, five were 16, and the rest were 17 years old at the time they committed the offenses.

At present, 20 of them are locked up at the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City, three at the Metro Manila District Jail in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City, two at the penal colony in Iwahig, Palawan, and one at the Correctional Institute for Women in Mandaluyong City.

Under the law, children below 15 at the time of the commission of the crime should have no criminal liability, Ilee explained.

"They should either be released to their parents or undergo an intervention program depending on the crime committed," she said in an interview by phone.

She also said that the age terms of those aged between 15 and 18 and who are sentenced to life imprisonment should be adjusted or shortened.

Ilee added that these offenders should be referred to youth homes and not imprisoned. "Institution should be the last resort," she stressed.

And if enacted into law, the JJWC, which runs under the Department of Justice, is overseas the implementation of the law, has wanted 5,243 youth offenders across the country.

Sandigan clears ex-BFAR officials of graft charges

THE SANDIGANBAYAN HAS cleared a former director of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) and two other ex-officials of graft charges filed four years ago.

The accused officials were former BFAR Director Dante Ignacio, now assistant secretary of the Department of Agriculture; Billy Blanco Jr., chief of BFAR technology packaging and publication unit, and Lita Dalmeo, chief accountant.

The case, initially filed in March 2002, involves the alleged P2.167-million overpricing of 10 aquanets at the Clark International Convention Exposition in May 1998.

Court records showed that the former officials were accused of conspiring with one another to approve the amount of P139,445.00, representing the 10-percent value-added tax (VAT), to be paid to the project contractor, Majestic Biological Colleton, even as NIE registered exemption.

The amount was paid on Majestic's money, Benitez Group, who was also acquitted of the charges because he later deducted the amount from the project's total cost.

In a 13-page decision, the anti-graft court said the evidence presented by the government prosecutors "failed to achieve beyond doubt that the accused acted with manifest partiality and evident bad faith..."

It added that the former officials did not gain anything as unwarranted benefit, noting that both parties did not dispute that the veteran was automatically covered by the VAT law and, thus as a result of the transaction, the company had to shoulder the P2,167 outrightly.

Also, after Liang was informed that the VAT be collected from the licensee was prohibited by the Commission on Audit, he sent a statement of account to BFAR deducting the amount from the final payment of the project's total cost.

"There was also no undue injury caused to the government. The amount ... was in fact returned to the government as the conclusion of the contract, that is, upon full payment of the retained price," the decision written by Presiding Justice Teresita Leonardo-De Castro said. Another Ju-

E. Lardizabal; 92

ENCARNACION VARONEC Velez Lardizabal of San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte, died on April 12 at the age of 92. She is survived by her sisters, nephews and other relatives. She was preceded in death by her sisters Marcedes Domingo, Concepcion Dalio, Rosario Alejandrino and Maria Adiarte.

She body lies at Arlington Memorial Chapels on Amorsolo Avenue, Quezon City. Interment will be on April 17 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City, after the 4 a.m. Mass at Arlington.

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MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2007

A 6

Building execs face sanctions over billboards

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

IN ITS CONTINUING EFFORT TO REGULATE the advertising billboards, the Department of Public Works and Highways is considering slapping sanctions on local building officials who issue permits counter to the DPWH's new billboard circular.

"If we find anybody issuing permits out in compliance [with the circular], we will sanction that building official," Public Works Secretary Manuel Bonoan said.

The building officials in local government units were given autonomy to issue building permits when the Local Government Code was enacted in 1991.

Earlier, the DPWH said nearly all the billboards lining major roads in the metropolis violated Building Code provisions, like setback requirements and location, and threatened landscapes.

Most, if not all, of the billboards, however, had been issued permits by local building officials, the DPWH said.

In the new billboard circular, the DPWH said local building officials could process billboard permit applications only after the "issuance of a clearance from the DPWH assessor or his duly authorized representative."

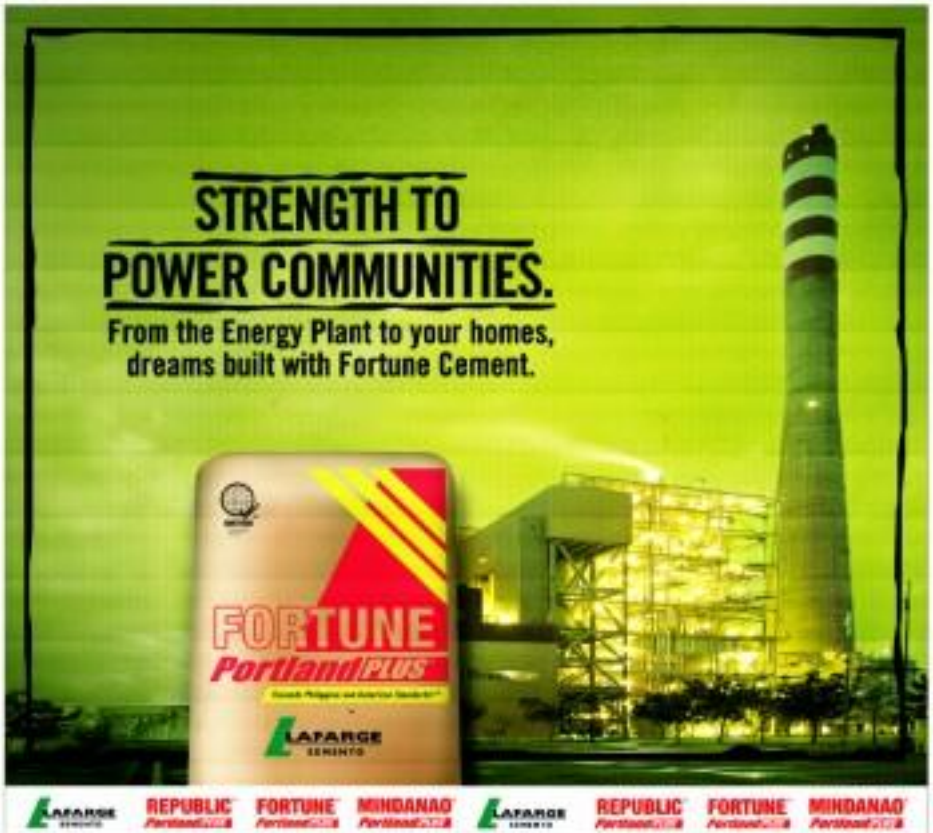
A major billboard company, however, described the new circular as being "too prohibitive." It questioned the circular's provisions on road setbacks and the sizes of road signs, saying there was "no such setback requirement under existing laws."

Its lawyers said the provision would be an added burden on the local building officials who were "already equipped to evaluate the applications for concurrence."

In reply, Bonoan said it was the building officials themselves who had proposed that "all construction of buildings or structures along national highways and secondary roads must first secure a DPWH clearance so that the setback requirements will be uniformly implemented."

Setbacks from main roads are the most common violation involving billboards. National Building Code Development Office director Nestor Gonzaga said.

The new circular requires free-standing billboards to be at least eight meters off main roads with widths of 30 meters or more, like Edsa. A setback of six meters is required off roads with widths of 25-29 meters. Setbacks are also mandated behind and beside free-standing billboards.



Blame brain, not heart, for hypertension, says study

LONDON—THE BRAIN—NOT the heart—is responsible for high blood pressure, according to details of a study by British researchers released on Sunday.

The scientists found that hypertension, which can lead to heart attacks, strokes and kidney damage, is an inflammatory vascular disease of the brain, not of the heart as previously thought.

They discovered that a protein located in the brain, ATM, traps white blood cells, which can then cause inflammation and obstruct blood flow, leading to poor oxygen supply to the brain.

Prof. Julian Paton, from Bristol University, western England, said the findings could lead to new ways of treating the condition.

"We are looking at the possibility of treating those patients that fail to respond to conventional therapy for hypertension with drugs that reduce blood vessel inflammation and increase blood flow within the brain," Paton added.

"The future challenge will be to understand the type of inflammation within the vessels in the brain, so we know what drug to use and how to target them, ideally. I could provide an off-the-shelf drug that would help with this disease."

Conventional treatment for reducing high blood pressure includes eating less fat food, reducing salt intake and regular exercise.

"Our working study is important because it suggests there are consequent causes of high blood pressure related to blood supply to the brain," said Prof. Jeremy Pearson, the associate medical director of the British Heart Foundation.

"It, therefore, opens up the possibility of new ways to treat this common, but often poorly managed condition," Pearson said.

About one in three people in Britain and more than 600 million people worldwide are said to suffer from hypertension.

The findings are to be published in the next edition of medical journal Hypertension. AFP

Docs didn't allow Mike A to see fight

From page A1

allowing him to watch the fight because he was a boxing patron and a staunch Pacquiao fan.

They were in the recuperating from the 10-hour open heart surgery he underwent on Monday at St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City.

"We talked about it this morning," Cervantes said, and the medical team, including members of the President's family, agreed not to tell him if Pacquiao lost the fight.

Cervantes

Cervantes told the members of the medical team had resulted in "unanimous" to inform him of the result if it was "favorable."

Asked why, Cervantes said: "So as not to increase his blood pressure."

The President's husband had led several Philippine delegations to Las Vegas to watch Pacquiao's bouts with Mexican boxing legends.

At the end of these million-dollar boxing matches, Pacquiao acknowledged in his corner's support.

Huddled before TV set

St. Luke's closure came to a halt noon after the latest warned at noon on free TV. TV crews, reporters and bystanders huddled before a TV set as Pacquiao battled Mexican Jorge Solis.

Nurses and even ordinary areas of his food chairs joined the crowd at the main entrance overlooking the fight.

It was comfortably quiet on the hospital's emergency room, during the whole hour. Reporters did not spot any ambulances or patient rushing in to get emergency treatment.

First audible words

At dawn yesterday, Arroyo uttered his first audible words to the delight of the President and a team of medical doctors, which has been combing his condition since he was operated on.

"To St. Luke's," said the President's husband when asked by Cervantes of

ARROYO

his whereabouts shortly after he opened his eyes at 6 a.m.

Cervantes told reporters that her patient was starting "to verbalize."

"I slept better last night," she quoted Arroyo as saying. But he appeared a bit sleepy though.

Arroyo had uttered some words on Saturday though not so audibly.

At bedside

While the medical team was watching, he mumbled a few words to his doctors, grandchildren Miranda Ulanta, and son Pampanga Rep. Mikey Arroyo, who were all at his bedside when he woke up.

"By tomorrow, he could be normal," said Cervantes.

Representative Arroyo, who left before noon, later told reporters that the most critical period in post-operative care appeared to have passed.

"He's feeling better now," said the embattled lawmaker.

Continuously improving

Based on a medical bulletin released at 9:00 a.m. yesterday, the President's husband was in relatively good shape.

Cervantes read the bulletin before reporters and gladly hand the TV cameras, saying Arroyo "is continuously improving."

She said all the vital organs were functioning well—kidneys, heart, gastrointestinal tract, liver and pancreas.

Back pain

"He complained of back pain," said the doctor who readily assured reporters that it was due to a prolonged bed rest after surgery.

Cervantes expected that the President's husband to be completely "off dialysis" by tomorrow.

The doctor, who at one point lost her cool while querying questions last week, appeared jovial, even joking that she wished the hospital would not have to issue daily medical bulletins "so that you're not also tied up here and life will continue."

On Saturday, a jubilant Cervantes reported then her patient was taken off a ventilator after he passed a "USG-or of newly formed urine," which meant that he was out of danger and on the road to full recovery.

"So the kidneys are functioning. The lungs are functioning. Everything is functioning right now like at out of danger," she said at the time. "If he can continuously produce urine then there will be no need for dialysis anymore."

The latest medical bulletin said:

- Kidneys are already functioning (with significant amounts of urine). The renal, liver and lung support from the ventilator is no longer necessary.
- Heart is doing well. Blood pressure is adequately controlled with acceptable heart rate.
- Gastrointestinal tract, liver and pancreas are stable although still closely monitored for any possible complications.
- Stable neurologic status, but still a bit sleepy and out assessment is this is still the effect of the anesthesia given to him during the cycle.
- Surgical wounds also stable (clean with healing already being established).

One of the duties is not to be answered today.

Risk of infection

Cervantes said the "risk of infection is still a possibility, especially catheter-related IV infections. Hence, adequate antibiotics are being given, besides pulling out catheter and IV lines as early as possible."

"He is still on bedside rehabilitation, with the plan of gradually mobilizing him," she said.

But overall, the medical team said the President and her family were "happy with the developments."

"We thank you all for your prayers and ask you to join us in continuing to pray for the complete recovery of [Arroyo]," said Cervantes, a gastroenterologist and hepatologist.

With the good news, the President slowly resumed her presidential duties, meeting on Sunday Ubaranie in Tondo, Manila, to hear Mass with members of Team Unity's ecumenical ministries.

RP Red Cross at 60: Facing disasters, global warming

By Ma. Corazon P. Daya

ONE DAY IN 1859, IN A BATTLEFIELD IN northern Italy, a young Swiss, Henry Dunant, came upon a horrific bloody scene where French and Italian troops, on one side, and Austrians on the other, were butchering one another. When the smoke cleared, 40,000 lay dead and dying without medical care.

It was from the killing fields of Solferino that Dunant picked up the bloody soul of what is now known as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on the mother of Red Cross and Red Crescent societies all over the world.

But forward to 2006 in Guinsaugon, Leyte: Filipino Red Cross volunteers helped victims and survivors of the killer landslide—largely attributed to climate change and environmental degradation—that buried three hillside communities under boulders and mud. Prayers and temporary tents are not enough. Physical and psychological rehabilitation, new homes, livelihood and environmental safety are also part of the Philippine National Red Cross' (PNRC) mission.

Bloody fields of battle, disaster-stricken communities, disasters and tortured stories of human suffering all over the world: here the landscape where the Red Cross thrives. Its daring stories about its volunteers' heroic and quiet feats are as red as its universal emblem, the red quatrocircled cross. (The crescent is used in some Islamic nations.)

No international humanitarian body could match the length and breadth of service of the Red Cross to nations and peoples all over the world in all crises, climes and situations: both big and small.

Like two weeks ago, PNRC ambulances were on stand-by and its blood bank ready as a hostage-taking drama involving a busload of schoolchildren was unfolding near Manila City Hall. "It was police matter but we were ready in case something exploded and blood was rated," PNRC Chair Gen. Richard Gordon said.

And some three ago, PNRC donated blood for the care of Pope Benedict's Mike Arroyo who underwent neurosurgery, a 16-hour surgery for a life-threatening brain condition that doctors said could have killed him in 24 hours had his condition remained undetected. Yes, that too, even as PNRC rescue crews continue to search amidst ruins left behind in their trail by two recent killer typhoons.

Global warming

But global warming and climate change—problems that were not in the horizon in the beginning when the Red Cross worked in war zones—are now urgent concerns. The tragedies in Quezon, Quirino and Surigao provinces, Guinsaugon in Leyte, the Bicol region—these were just symptoms of human-induced problems looming ahead.

"The disaster in Ormoc was so bad that the billboards falling in Metro Manila was big news," Gordon complained.

The Red Cross, an international humanitarian non-government organization, had been present in the Philippines since the later part of the Spanish colonial era and the American occupation (as the American Red Cross). It was on April 22, 1947 that the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) came to be and with President Manuel Roxas proudly proclaiming as a public ceremony the Red Cross' coming of age in the Philippines.

Today, PNRC marks its 60th year of service. Sen. Richard Gordon is at the helm to chair and bring to his job his hands-on experience as Olongapo mayor during the 1991 Mt. Pinatubo eruption that altered the landscape of Central Luzon and the lives of the people. Senator Aquilino "Pimentel Secretary-General Atty. Nicolas Lorin serves as secretary-general.

HENRYUU

HENRYUU: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, universality. "If any of these is lacking, kindi eh-e," (it is not complete) a Red Cross volunteer quipped, making a play on the Filipino word that includes). These big words should be etched in the heart of every Red Cross volunteer anywhere in the world. They are emblazoned on the façade of the headquarters of the PNRC on Bonifacio Drive in Manila for passersby to see.

"Unselfish voluntary service, with emphasis on service," Dr. Lorin stressed. Community volunteers are in flying and disaster-prone areas are being trained under PNRC's flagship program I Love You 143 which means recruiting and training 43 volunteers in every barangay, 20 for blood donors, nine for disaster response and nine for community health. PNRC hopes to reach 42,000 barangays this year.

Katrina and Isanami

While PNRC has the Filipinos' needs as priority, it has not hesitated in reaching out to the victims of Hurricane Katrina in the US and the killer tsunami that struck several countries and killed hundreds of thousands.

"For the first time, the PNRC became a donor society to countries struck by massive disasters," Gordon proudly said. "We donated $100,000 and over P5.0 million to the post-Katrina and tsunami operations respectively, and $100,000 plus a disaster response team to earthquake hit Pakistan."

150,000 volunteers

But Gordon added: "The PNRC is only as strong as our people. Our achievements would not have been possible without the concerted efforts of our humanitarian staff and 150,000 strong volunteers. We made sure our great Boy Scout training to keep them up to speed."

PNRC depends mainly on donors, business

Ode to Virgin Mary to usher in Earth Day fete

By TJ Burgonio

EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT AS GREEN AS THE next fellow, watching the live concert may well be worth your time.

Some 100 classical singers and instrumentalists will gather for a "healing picnic" for the environment and perform several versions of Ave Maria, including Verdi's, in a pre-Earth Day concert this week. (See related story in Lifestyle, Page C1.)

"It's one of [the] most recognizable classics, you'll be happy to hear three moving renditions by our very own classical singers. The language of art is superior to all it comes from the heart," Odette Alcantara, Earth Day Foundation Philippines vice-chairman and executive vice-phone interview.

The singers, five sections will open the concert with Gounod's Ave Maria, usually tutored by Benedictine monks in monasteries, accompanied by Raul Jimeno and Mary Ann Lopez on two grand pianos.

The grand finale will be Verdi's Ave Maria, accompanied by The Middling Ensemble.

As for the "Ave Maria from the rivers of," suggests, the concert is a "prayer" to Mary, the "Goddess of the Cosmos," to heed the environmental Abrasions, Mother Earth continues to suffer from [illegible] and irresponsible phone interview.

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"By singing Ave Maria, we will be praying for our enlightenment so we can take seriously our sacred duty to take care of the planet and uphold the integrity of God's creation," Alcantara said.

The free concert, produced by Earth Day Network in collaboration with Manila Theater Foundation, is set for Friday night at Rizal Park in Manila. Earth Day will be celebrated the next day.

"Our call right now is green governance, green environment, green economics and green politics," Alcantara said.

The Red Cross in times of conflict

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, together with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies combine to form the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

During international conflicts, the ICRC focuses its work on the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocol I of 1977. These treaties list down the ICRC's right to carry out certain activities such as bringing relief to wounded, sick or shipwrecked military personnel, visiting prisoners of war, aiding civilians and, in general terms, ensuring that those protected by humanitarian law are treated more dignly.

Ensuing non-international armed conflicts, the ICRC bases its work on Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol II, article 4 recognizes the ICRC's right to offer its services to ensuring another and for view to engaging in relief activities and visiting people detained in connection with the conflict.

The red cross on a white background was adopted by the four Geneva Conventions in 1864, and was officially recognized in the diplomatic signs of the medical services of armed forces.

In 1992, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies adopted as its emblem the red cross and red crescent on a white background. In times of war, first, or a the visible sign of protection conferred by the Geneva Conventions.

Cervo D'Ogna

RP Red Cross . . .

From page A1

corporations mainly but it has also tapped individuals, families and communities through counseling, inquiry, tracing and more country-wide, among others. Some runs involved treating overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) believed to be in distress or missing. The main clients are the Red Cross humanitarian network. Filipinos caught in the conflict in Afghanistan were treated and repatriated through the efforts of PRRC.

Red Cross doctor dropping with human drama are so numerous they could fill up volumes. But there is also a daily stream of stories of ICRC-known volunteers not just as supplying and relifting. There is no dearth of Filipino heroes when the call is sounded, when human lives are on the line.

The Philippine National Red Cross offers Philippine opportunity to respond to the call.

(The PRRC headquarters is on Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila, Tel. 527-0000 to 99. E-mail: prcha@redcross.org.ph. Website: redcross.org.ph)

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MILF chair Al Haj Murad Ebrahim (center) and United country representative Dr. Michelo Alipui (right) sign the Days of Peace agreement. Maj. Gen. Rolo Mial Iscandar Khan, head of the International Monitoring Team, witnesses the signing.

'Days of Peace' coming to Mindanao

IN WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS A "HISTORIC event," Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) chair Al Haj Murad Ebrahim, and United country representative Dr. Michelo Alipui, have signed a joint communiqué under which basic services will be delivered to armed conflict-affected communities in the southern Philippines under a program dubbed "Days of Peace."

The MILF pledged to "provide access and protection security" for the service delivery teams.

Beginning today, the Days of Peace campaign will provide immunization, nutrient supplements, deworming and breast-feeding counseling to some 300 communities that were battered by unavoidable clashes between government forces and the MILF and other separatist and terrorist groups.

Two more Days of Peace will be held in June or July and in October this year, when more services will be provided, such as birth registration, malaria control and the distribution of educational supplies, among other things, it was announced.

Dr. Abbas Candao, executive director of the Bangsamoro Development Agency—the MILF agency mandated to carry out humanitarian, rehabilitation and development programs in conflict-affected areas—commended the AGA on "support the program with all (our) resources."

Also involved in the campaign are the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, Department of Health, International Monitoring Team, Joint Coordinating Committee for the Cessation of Hostilities, local government units and civil society organizations.

"We would like to see the campaign implemented as a component of the ongoing peace process between the MILF and the government. We would like our people to accept the program as one of the fruits of the ongoing peace process," Ebrahim said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, April 16, 2007
2nd Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 4:32-35
Gospel: John 3:1-8

Among the Pharisees there was a ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus. He came to Jesus by night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you have come from God to teach us, for no one can perform miracles as you do unless God is with him."

Jesus replied, "Truly I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again from above."

Nicodemus said, "How can this be (to rebirth for a grown man)? Who could go back to his mother's womb and be born again?" Jesus replied, "Truly, I say to you, No one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Because of this, don't be surprised when I say: 'You must be born again from above.'

"The wind blows where it pleases and you hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. It is the same with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Commentary

Nine and John, once released, pray to God for courage—that they might do the miracles of the Gospel. Then the entire place is filled with the Spirit and they grow in confidence. The Church, the Body of Christ grows and moves out into the world, in spite of persecution and threats.

Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night. He sits and questions the one who is the Light of the World. And Jesus seeks to teach him about baptism and being born of water and the spirit, being birthed into a new life as drastically different as the one in from in his mother's womb and the one in the tomb. But this life is one of grace and spirit, lived in community with others. Through baptism we are initiated and drawn into the Body of Christ, into the embrace of the Spirit and into the abiding place of God in Jesus, the Trinity. This is our life now.

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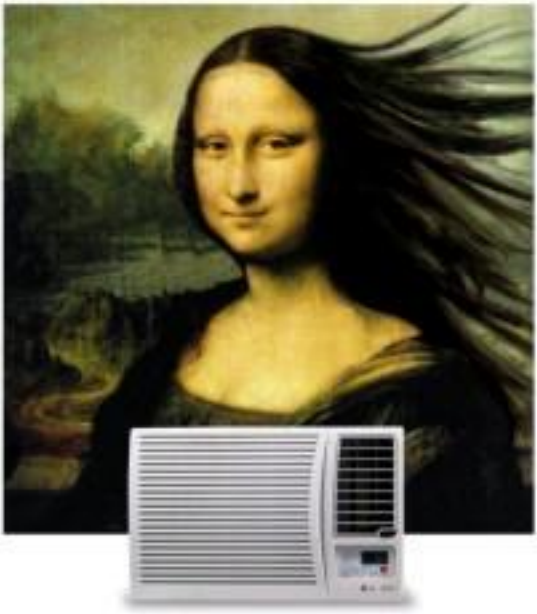

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Loren has vote protection, not presidency, on her mind

By Norman Bordadora

ALTHOUGH CONSTESTED RANKING SEN. 1, in second survey, Genuine Opposition presidential candidate Loren Legarda is not letting her guard down.

Legarda, who topped the 1998 senatorial race, said being in the No. 1 spot was no excuse to slacken one's vigilance in protecting one's votes in the coming elections.

"Passing the survey is not an excuse to relax or be vigilant in protecting the votes," she said.

She likes it if a reason to think about Hello-ranking in 2010, she said.

"If I haven't got me to thinking about the presidency in 2010. It gets me to think about protecting the votes in 2007," Legarda said of the unprecedented number her No. 1 ranking in all except one survey during the campaign period for her well-positioned for the presidential race three years from now.

Legarda also topped the latest survey on the people's net of national leaders.

"I am not overwhelmed until I am re-honored. The truth is the survey is even as more important than the commercial survey because it includes all unclosed figures from both the past and present (administration) ," Legarda said.

"It's exhausting feeling. But know the feeling when you're in love? That's the way it is," she said to describe how she felt whenever she received news of her ranking in the surveys.

Last week, Legarda joined two other contestant top ranking senatorial candidates—former President Manuel Villar and Sen. Panfilo Lacson—in a GO campaign rally in Cagayan de Oro City.

Villar and Lacson are also being touted as "presidentiables" along with 2004's runner-up at vice-presidential, Sen. Manuel Roxas II.

They were joined by fellow opposition candidates former senator John Osmeña and Atty. Dominique Cojuangco and former Agusto "Boy" Pimentel III.

Legarda has a pending election protest against Vice President Noli de Castro. In his campaign sorties, the former talks about election fraud and urges voters to be vigilant.

"The face of electoral fraud has changed from actual to wholesale to manufactured stuffing and faking of election results. No one is safe," said Pimentel, who served as the lawyer of his father, Aquilino Jr., when the latter lost the senatorial race in 1995 due to alleged vote-shaving and padding.

Pimentel said that because of the possibility of massive cheating through fixed election returns, moreover the candidates occupying the No. 7 spot in the senatorial contests is safe from vote padding and shaving as the votes come in from the remote areas.

"It used to be that the No. 10 to No. 12 were never the unsafe positions. But now, it is the No. 7 to No. 12 spots because of the change in election fraud tactics and schemes," Pimentel said.

Pimentel, who has consistently placed No. 10 and above in the senatorial surveys, said he's not happy seeing the top spot in the ranking elections. He said he'd be happy placing higher than the No. 7 to No. 12 spots.

Lacson, for his part, urged Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos Jr. to leave a good legacy by ensuring clean and honest elections in May.

TU bets bat for gay group

TEAM UNITY Silliman Inits Adam Arcenal Michael Belmes are keen on seeing the votes of Filipino gays and lesbians other the Commission on Elections (Comelec) refused to accredit a homosexual party-list group for the May 14 elections and dismissed its bride, Dindyo Balsamo, as a national candidate.

"We really need to help the gay community because they are being discriminated against. I don't know why the Comelec disallowed Ang Ladlad from running in a party-list group. It could have been an opportunity for them to have a representative in Congress," said Arroyo, a human rights lawyer.

Balsamo said his platform included equal rights for gays and lesbians. "I believe they need representation in Congress because they have been discriminated against for a very long time."

"They are considered a marginalized sector. We are there every day and many of us do not accept them as equals. This could have been a very strong move if we had allowed them to run as a party-list group," he said. GMC, Tatiana Gonzalez, Jr.

US sees inroads in antiterror fight in Southeast Asia

PHNOM PENH—FIVE YEARS after declaring a new front in the war on terror" in Southeast Asia, the United States says it is making inroads in disrupting militant groups through deft partnerships with governments in the region.

But despite progress in making arrests, the homegrown threat in the region remains poorly understood urging violence in southern Thailand and exported plans by top militant Islamist group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) for high-profile bombings against Western targets.

The US military said it has forged a strategy of "indirect approach" to help Southeast Asian governments fight the terrorist menace—including training government soldiers, enhancing surveillance capability to flush out potential "safe havens" and promoting economic development.

But Walter Lohman, director of a conference on the part of the US is not the right answer. We've learned from experience that having large footprints is problematic," said Help, visiting fellow Kuala, of the Defense Department's principal director for South and Southeast Asia and Pacific security affairs.

"We think that this northern approach will eventually, over a long-term effort, address some of the root causes of terrorism and I most importantly help reduce the overriding of terrorists and insurgents the emphasis" the region, he said.

In the southern Philippines, Nolan said, local troops being trained by US special forces recently killed the top two leaders of the deadly Abu Sayyaf militant group and were hot on the trail of two JI bomb-makers sheltered by the group.

Maritime surveillance

Washington is also helping to build a maritime surveillance network in Southeast Asia, home to one of the world's most strategic sea lanes, as militants increasingly use the region as a refuge, haven and to smuggle weapons.

The United States just provided $12.2 million to Malaysia to help build surveillance capability in the Sulawesi Sea that can be used by other Southeast Asian nations, he example, with the movement of this forces' and JI bombers from there to the Philippines and Indonesian coast safety.

"Things like maritime security are allowing the Indonesians and the Malaysians to work and cooperate and for the Philippines to identify potential safe havens for these terrorists and keep the pressure on," Nolan said.

Delhi's worry is also being asked to help the region address the security problems in the Sulu Archipelago "sync or triangle," where the near three borders of Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia meet.

2nd front opened in 2002

The United States opened a second front in its war on terror in Southeast Asia in 2002 after its invasion of Afghanistan following the September 2001 US attacks masterminded by al-Qaeda bin Laden's Osama bin Laden.

JI, Southeast Asia's al-Qaeda wing, remains the region's most potent extremist group and is believed to have been behind a number of bombings in Indonesia, including attacks on the resort island of Bali in 2002 and 2005 in which more than 200 people were killed.

Although 2006 was the first year since 2002 that JI did not stage a major terror attack in the region, experts warn they remain formidably keen.

Recent raids, arrests and the recovery of explosives in Indonesia's Central Java "make it clear that JI has continuously been trying to rebuild its capabilities and is preparing for more high-profile bombings against Western targets," said Zachary Abuza, an American terrorism expert who has done extensive studies in Southeast Asia.

The organization has already been involved in the most deadly terrorist incidents in Southeast Asia, he said.

Concern in Thailand

Washington is also concerned about unending violence in Thailand's Muslim majority south hindering Bangkok's, especially after more than 12,000 people have been killed since an insurgency months and more than two years ago.

The attacks have escalated in the past six months even after Thailand's military-installed government launched a raft of peace measures since the September 2006 coup.

While the United States has frozen military aid to Bangkok due to the coup, it is also worried that al-Qaida-linked groups could capitalize on and fuel the insurgency, posing a bigger regional problem, diplomats and experts said.

Nolan said "the problem is that there is that al-Qaeda larger organization that will capitalize on the chaos and the confusion and the criminality that's going on."

"We hope and we believe" the current Thai government "to get on to be able to get elections restarted and we will be able to restart funding shortly," he said. AFP

Family of missing US volunteer airs hope

From page A1:

grateful to the US government for its help in the Philippines and especially the people who are doing all they can to locate her," the family said.

CAMPBELL

Extensive search

The US Embassy in Manila has released a photograph and a physical description of Campbell in the hope that those who would recognize her and report her whereabouts to local and US authorities involved in the search.

Peace Corps Director Ron Tschetter said in a statement that the organization, which has 137 volunteers in the Philippines, had been in constant coordination with the American Embassy in Manila and Philippine authorities.

"Several thousand 'missing person' flyers have been posted throughout the search area and information is being released to the public through the media, including radio broadcasts. Volunteer searches in the area are being coordinated both on foot and by helicopter," Tschetter said.

Embassy spokesperson Matthew Lussenhop told the Inquirer that the mission has been working with the military and police to look for Campbell. He said, however, that following two days of search, "there's no new development to report."

PO3 Butch Malitang, duty officer of the Bagac police, said three teams composed of department of tourism-accredited tourist guides in Bagac had been tapped to help in the search.

Malitang said Senior Supt. Pedro Garcia, Bagac police director, had also dispatched four search and rescue teams, composed of seven members each, to widen the search.

No sighting yet

However, no sighting of Campbell has been reported as of 8 p.m., Sunday.

Col. Nestor Pelin, chief of the Army's 7th Infantry Brigade, said soldiers in Bataan had been mobilized to help in the search along with two military helicopters.

Police Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Mariing, commander of the Army's 7th Infantry Division, said troops in the area reported that Campbell visited an Emmaus Christian Church in Bataan on April 8 and handed a tract to the Bataan pastor, Jun Jun.

Mariing said Campbell reportedly proceeded to Bataan where she stayed in a village inn. He said Campbell contracted a motorcar and asked him to meet her at the inn at 6:30 p.m. that day but she did not show up.

He said Campbell had reserved a ticket for a 10:30 a.m. flight to Manila from Subic on April 9 but she failed to show up for the trip.

8,000 volunteers

Before her searching assignment, Campbell had served various roles in villages in Bataan, Sorsogon, including the reconstruction of a school and its library and the launch of an ecological awareness campaign through building an "eco center" for the town, her family said.

Some 8,000 volunteers have come to the Philippines since 1961, when the Peace Corps was formed to encourage Americans to undertake outreach programs around the world for the youth, community development, environment, education and information technology. With a report from Filomeno Fluyo Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

IN THE KNOW

Kidnapped by NPA?

THE LAST TIME THE US PEACE CORPS DIvolunteers in the Philippines was on June 13, 1990, when communist New People's Army guerrillas abducted volunteer Timothy Fauteux in Negros Occidental.

Fauteux was released 50 days later after the NPA announced that there was "no prima facie evidence to warrant (his) conviction on charges of spying against the revolutionary movement."

"Les like Fauteux's arrest serve as a warning to those who are engaging in counter-insurgency activities," the NPA said.

After released on that day—Aug. 2, 1990—two Japanese aid worker Yuzuru Miyata of On Organization for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement, which the rebels also accused of counter-insurgency activities, Miyata was kidnapped by the NPA in Negros Occidental on May 20. He was held for 61 days.

Both Miyata and Fauteux were working in rural aid projects at the time of their abduction.

Miyata was released first in Manila town in Negros Occidental, while Fauteux, an agricultural expert, was handed over to Philippine National Red Cross officials hours later outside Silay City, following weeks of negotiations between communist leaders in the island and government officials.

The militant had agreed to a three-day truce to allow their release. An initial demand of a P5 million ransom for Miyata was subsequently dropped after the Communist Party of the Philippines Central Committee intervened. Karlo Ordinario, Inquirer Research

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- Don't forget there's no such thing as tucked out.
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- Don't forget sandals with stockings work only if you're from a department store.
- Don't forget brushing alone is not enough.

VOL. XXIV, NO. 127

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Parties for sale

THE PUBLIC HAS ALWAYS SUSPECTED THAT EVEN the party-list system was not immune to election fraud. In mid-2005, we had our worst suspicions confirmed by the Garcillano tapes—evidently the fruit of a wiretapping operation immediately after the May 2004 vote—when the subject of manipulated party-list results in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao came up, at least twice.

EDITORIAL Sometime in June 2004, for instance, a still unidentified man telephoned the subject of the wiretaps, an election expert most Filipinos believe was Virgilio Garcillano.

The man asks, "Kailan nag-ano 'yong sa party list?"—which in context is essentially a question about the schedule of manipulation. When will the results in the ARMM be fixed, that is what the man is asking.

The subject of the wiretaps—Garci, to most Filipinos—gives what looks like a vague answer ("Eto-ano ito pa"), but then come the specifics. He says he would like to start with the party-list group ALE, but he also expresses his preference to fix the votes of other favored party-list groups in batches. ("Pero gusto ko muna-batch-batch.") Apparently, the election operator is also an efficiency expert.

The subject then signs off: "Pero papikitin ito, Pedro." This is the equivalent, in idiomatic English, of "I'll try" or, better, "I'll really give it a try" but in context it means: I will work on what you want.

What the caller wanted, he got. As the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism explained in detail in a blog post in June 2005, ALE (Ang Laban ng Indigtrong Pilipino) got far and away the most number of votes in the ARMM. This was quite a feat, for what the PCIJ reminds us is "a first-time party-list group." Altogether, ALE received 176,034 votes in the five provinces of the ARMM, a remarkable 22.5 percent of all party-list votes cast.

A petition the Cibac party-list group filed with the Comelec in May 2004 questioned the party-list vote totals in Tawi-Tawi (an extraordinary 63.4 percent of registered voters in the province), Maguindanao province (an astonishing 84.65 percent), and Lanao del Sur (an incredible 103.3 percent—that is to say, there were more votes than there were voters). In contrast, the party-list turnout nationwide was about 35 percent.

If we expected a cleanup of the party-list system in the face of such telling evidence, well, there's a candidate for Congress in Bukidnon we need to meet.

Now comes the news that party-list voting results are not the only things for sale. Even party-list accreditations and nominations are going to the highest bidder.

Reports in both ABS-CBN and in this paper reveal a broad-leaking epidemic in election operators, some of whom happen to be associated with Malacañang.

An informant identified only as "Jose" told the Bandila newscast that an official from Malacañang's Office of External Affairs offered him the first nominee's slot in a party-list group, for a friendly rate of P5 million. (The rate for non-friends, he said, was P10 million to P20 million.)

Antecedent Cinco of Bantay Republic Act 7941 (the name refers to the law that established the party-list system) told this paper's Christian Esguerra that a group of fixers offered to set up his group in Congress through the party-list back door, for as much as P7 million. Successful accreditation alone was worth some P1.2 million as a "starting figure," he said.

Last week, Damien Rewuste of Ang Ladlad, the party-list group of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders that the Commission on Elections declined to accredit, revealed that his organization was approached twice by operators offering accreditation for a fee. In September last year, the amount was a modest P180,000; in February, the price had risen to half a million.

To be sure, Comelec Commissioner Rene Sarmiento said he would ask his colleagues to look into the allegations, saying, correctly, that the claim "undermines the Comelec as an institution." But Chair Benjamin Abalos was in his usual "damn-the-public-opinion" mode: Name names, he challenged those who have already taken a great risk by coming out in the open.

Given that Abalos was already the Comelec chair when the mistakes in Lanao del Sur took place, his challenge is a slap on the public's face. What he needs to do is to begin a no-nonsense probe, not give excuses.

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How to make millions the easy way

YOU HAVE TO ADMIRE IT TO DESPISE IT. THEY are the most resourceful people in the world. They can make money out of anything. They turn used money from garbage. From junk, from discarded wood, etc. They make money, out of it, from selling expired spices, foundations and lagging pennies. They are still making money from all sorts of other documents or forms.

Now they are making millions of pesos from selling party-list accreditations and nominations. This is why applications for party-list accreditation filed until the Commission on Elections have suddenly ballooned. (The Comelec has accredited at least 30 party-list groups for the May 14 elections.) And that is why the Comelec refuses to reveal the names of party-list nominees. Some of those selling the accreditations and nominations were reportedly Comelec employees and officials.

I am glad that former Comelec Chair Christian Monsod agrees that the party-list system is being abused. He says the system has been "hamstrung" and has "grown out of control." He suggests that we "go back to the Constitution." He did not, why with the party-list system? Are up in the first place and why should every group that says it is marginalized be registered as a party-list?

Ordre Republic Act 7941 (the Party-List System Law) 10 of the 220 seats in the House of Representatives are reserved for party-list groups. Half of these 10 seats is reserved for the marginalized sectors. The Commission on Elections, however, has more than 30 marginalized, regional and sectoral party-list groups. The system is no longer limited to the marginalized sectors, Monsod says.

And that is how smart operators in and out of the government—the party-list opportunity crooks, piracy of money, Ahmad Tito Chico, head of the Bantay Republic Act 7941, told this writer, claiming connections with the Comelec and the Intelligence Office of General Affairs (or peddling influence) for party-list groups. Danilo Reyes, head of the Bandila-led group Ang Ladlad, said his group has been offered accreditation for a fee. The list ranged from a low of P100,000 to a high of P1.6 million. Bidding politicians who want to enter the House through the backdoor were also offered nominations in already accredited groups for less than nine senators to millions of pesos.

Antique claims that some of the newly accredited party-list groups are actually government fronts and that some of their nominees are really fledgeling officials. The Palace wants to pad the House membership with allies so that the opposition can't have a majority. (If the opposition gains a majority, President Macapagal-Arroyo will surely be impeached.) The decision of the Comelec to keep the identities of the nominees a secret raises this suspicion.

Monsod is right, we should review the Party-List System Law and amend it to prevent its abuse. It is too late now to prevent its use and abuse to the May polls. But there is still the Comelec, an independent constitutional body that can prevent operators from making a mockery of the Constitution and the laws. The commissioners should not let the people down.

* * *

How is another way smart operators are making millions of pesos easily. Recently, the newspapers reported that the Department of Transportation and Communications were "secretly" accepting unsolicited proposals for the installation of a National Broadband Network (NBN). Unfortunately, there was a complaint from a firm that had made such an unsolicited proposal much earlier than the firm whose proposal is the one being considered by the DOTC. Why do you think the DOTC is giving priority to the later proponent? Millions of reasons?

The complainant, Amsterdam Holdings Inc. (AHI), said in a letter that the DOTC should evaluate first AHI's proposed terms of just going ahead to consider another NBN proposal from the Chinese company ZTE, which came later.

AHI filed last December 2006 an unsolicited proposal to build an NBN (Satellite, terrestrial, Internet) under a Build-Operate-Own (BOO) scheme. The project, which will cost $240 million, will be financed privately.

In February 2007, Chinese telecommunications supplier ZTE filed another unsolicited proposal to build its NBN under a BOO scheme. Government-to-Government (G to G) loan agreement; the NBN network will then be transferred to the DOTC for its operation. The Philippines will have to issue a sovereign guarantee for the loan from the Chinese government.

"The rules on Unsolicited Proposals require the Agency/GOU to perform the initial evaluation of a project based on the merits of the proposal, the qualifications of the proponent, and the possibility of contractual arrangement and propriety of the allocation within sixty (60) days of submission of a complete proposal," said the AHI letter.

"The Agency should advise the proponent whether it accepts the proposal, which acceptance is contingent upon the proponent's detailed negotiations," or if it rejects the proposal. (Section 18.6 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 7718—these is presumably the basis recognized in the "unsolicited proposals," the Agency/GOU shall not evaluate other similar proposals until bids are solicited, or if negotiations between Agency/GOU and the original proponent fail."

The AHI letter said: "We ask that DOTC actively comply with the rules on unsolicited proposals and, accordingly, immediately commence evaluation of AHI's proposal as before the first complete proposal submitted for the (NBN). Only if a bid and fair observance of the rules will DOTC live up to the ... ideals of good governance."

Differences

CHIEF JUSTICE REYNATO PUNO HAS JOINED very unnerving things to tell the Filipino media before me with last week in Baguio. Specifically, the differences between Jesus Christ and any candidates today.

"Jesus did not rely on economic platform," Puno said. "He did not walk through the streets of political power. He did not name distinguished citizens giving him the social imprimatur. He needed no power, no publicity, no support. He showed us that one could revolutionize society as a servant, not as king."

I'm glad there's one Puno that's capable of thought. I'm even glad that there's one Puno that's capable of linking this insight to patriotism. Although had he harbored a supremely acute sensibility, the Supreme Court Chief Justice might also have wondered if the audience would have laughed so hard if he had let passive, invisible weapons instead if he were introduced as the son of a carpenter or related of Bill Clinton's eminent companions. If I recall my Bible right, once before).

I wonder sometimes why the same Jesus last December when I saw GMA appear in a life-size nativity tableau, courtesy of Lupin Kashiwa. Santa's not very inspired machine. I said then that as far as I could teach the message of the Nativity was that God, the most powerful being in the universe, unleash power by becoming just an ordinary mortal but the humblest of all mortals, a son of a jobless carpenter and a woman being gossiped about as carrying another man's child. This wasn't exactly the message the new Christmas in the Philippines. Christ's whole being, from womb to tomb, told of how the only way to profit in life was to turn the whole world and just over you.

In my case as Jesus, I have no power, wealth or weapons. I can only lay claim to the power of words, the wealth of friends and a sensitive enough that I use an really bad losers with guns.

But I'd like to add a few more things to Puno's observations about the differences between Christ and any candidates.

Christ made the humblest of men the preachers

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

of his word. He told Peter and some other fishermen he saw doing the chore that henceforth they would cast nets from fishers of fish to fishers of men. Our candidates have made the glorious of all agencies, the "presidential," the province of the most moral. Remember, they've told Roy Almonte et al. that they would move from fishers of nonsense to fishers of votes. They've also told Ben Sarmiento that he would remain the worst, most corrupt fisherman.

Christ was grudged about for going around with a well-known prostitute, one who sold her body for a living. Our candidates (administration/opposition) are grudged about for being with known prostitutes, people who have sold their souls to the devil. By God's grace, Christ cannot bury disgruntlement from others to save. By PCSO's and Pagcor's billions, our candidates (or all administrations) are burying their heads in Cyan (Color) water to whole.

Christ multiplied six loaves of bread and six fishes into thousands and thereby managed to feed a starving audience. Our Administration senatorial candidates will multiply their P200 million each campaign money into billions once they win, and then they will return to feed their starving hungry people. Christ made one blind see, our candidates are making the seeing blind. Christ healed the sick, our candidates are making the healthy sick—sick from by the sight of them. Christ brought Lazarus back from the dead, our (administration) candidates are helping send this country's journalists and political activists where Lazarus came from.

Christ said, "The exalted shall be humbled and the humble exalted." Our (administration) candidates mean, "Man Bow Carmona will be low, and Mike Defensor will be fine." Christ said, "Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's." Our (administration) candidates say "Doesn't matter how you get, we'll take care of the money." Christ said, "Man does not live by bread alone," thereby encouraging spirituality. Progress Pickup says, "Plant a Palmer in the future," thereby discouraging spirituality.

Christ passed off the Pharisees by not acknowledging their hold on the faithful and by faithfully preaching the power of love. Our candidates are pissing bibs into the net. Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita holds on the faithful and faithfully preaching the love of power. Despite encouragement from his disciples, Christ spurned the overtures of Simon Zealous to pursue the influence into political capital. Despite encouragement from others, our candidates are determined to parlay their popularity into political capital, stated by Pilate what kingdom he is ruler of, Christ answered, "My kingdom is not of this world." Related to his use in particular what kingdom they are selling about, the (administration) candidates say, "Our kingdom is ours even world—it is Enchanted."

Christ was betrayed by Judas. Our candidates betray Judas daily in Ulul, FM they betray—only their members. Christ was sentenced to death by his own people. Juan de la Cruz is condemned to death by his own leaders. Christ was crucified, died and was buried. You wish that would happen to our candidates. Christ ascended from the dead to sit on the right hand of God. Our candidates are the ones who ascend to power to hand sins over death. The administration candidates will ascend from the graveyard of server predictions and show a shocking country "Election" will down to show they have over votes. Christ is the way, the truth and the life. Our candidates are the way, side, the lie and will be the death of truth.

When we talk about what heaven has done for us, we say, "Jesus Christ!" When we talk about what our politicians have done to us, we explode, "Jesus Christ!"

The fault is in RA 7941

LIKE THE CLAMOR FOR THE RELEASE OF THE names nominated for the party-list system, I am not sure, however, if "nothing" at the Commission on Elections' desks would be an adequate response to the problem. The clamor should be addressed also to the party-list organizations themselves and, if the fault lies in the judiciary.

Why do I say that nothing in the Comelec desks "would be adequate" by reason of RA 7941? RA 7941 (The Party-List System Act) commands the Comelec to publish a certified list of political organizations which have applied for participation in the party-list system, a list recognizably with the Comelec. "The names of the parties for which certificates of nomination are to be certified last."

Under our system of law, this command is presumed to be valid and is effective only in the hands of the Comelec. The Comelec, of course, may challenge the validity of this provision. But I have the impression that the Comelec has already expressed its basic opposition, the Comelec is content to have its hands tied. Hence, don't expect help from the as yet unsubmitted Comelec.

However, is there hope in this prohibition imposed on the Comelec by RA 7941? In my mind, there is hope in the diligence of the electoral candidates' participation and organizations in the House of Representatives. As RA 7941 says, a party and organization merely submits "a manifestation of its desire to participate in the party-list system." The object of the law is to enable "Filipino citizens belonging to marginalized and underrepresented sectors, organizations and parties, and who lack well-defined political constituencies ... to become members of the House of Representatives."

This is in keeping with the duties of the Comelec under the constitution to "enforce and administer all laws for giving voice to the underbrowsed sectors. The voters, therefore, should be enabled to assess whether the institutions and constituents to the for nomination and nominations of appropriate legislators. The voter will have the duty and privilege to reject just the nominees themselves of the ruling elite.

It is possible that a party list organization may, as a matter of fact, become a vehicle for the elite." But, because under Sec. 6 of RA 7941 empowers the Comelec to eliminate the qualities of the parties or organizations for purposes of qualification. In applying these, we may be imposed on the Comelec to scrutinize the qualities of the nominees. Scrutinizing them is the prerogative of voters.

Moreover, the party list organizations are not static. They do change, whether by nominees that they also nominate the ranking of their nominees. Persons are graduated by the Comelec in the order of party-list ranking. Sec. 15 says, "Any list representative shall be proclaimed by the Comelec based on the list of names submitted to it by the respective parties, organizations, or coalitions in the order according to their ranking in said list." The ranking, incidentally, are very well be self-nominated persons in spite of the ranking given them. But

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

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Giant step for a priest

FR. EDEME BARLAAN'S CHAIRMANSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT of Tampanga inexplicably rekindled my childhood bonds with San Fernando, my base to this day.

What "extraordinary mission" led a priest to do something "regularly political"? I could imagine the process flaring, yet I could empathize with the conflicts he must have gone through.

Fr. Barlaan's appointment was a surprise to common knowledge; one candidate reported to be "linked to the criminal gambling trade" of Jueteng, the other "in the tainting of public funds cum of quarry taxes." Yet my persuasion was not into the fray. The rage in time of Tampanga mostly unfounded. Fr. Barlaan's lucid Chronicle Digest are scattered with alleged rumors of Jueteng money or some private.

Nothing to break the straight bold is Father Edeme's many times he political stress. This is the kind of man we have up all because it is exploding before their very faces.

But there may also be an invisible inside that the priest is waging, perhaps inadvertently, deep in his very priesthood and his sense of mission.

I refer to conflicts of dichotomies rooted for ages in the Church and in society: the sacred and the secular body and soul, justice and religious, Church and State, the flesh and the spirit, this world and the next, etc., with our old scripture, the other inferior, our temporary, the other eternal, the now, not good, the other evil, etc. The extreme has been pushed to unquestionable and liberation. It has often been the body of priests, royal against the

COMMENTARY

Asuncion David Maramba

decision, at non-sectarian and somewhat bewildered.

And there is the interesting wish Ernie shares him in order the political line: "Now is nothing to stop a priest from running for public office" but "Father Ede requires that he be suspended from the priesthood." Clerics are not allowed to hold any office by constitution, absolutely or appointive." If Father Ede is not late round, a political campaign on Father Eddie. I just hope that the first of office, of possible corruption, of expenses, does not enter the equation how the local Church be accused of not playing politics because it is.

Reverend Father Edeme (Father, I says, "the Jueteng" dominion" and "dominion from your invisible sources." In the true friends, it says that the rejection "should not be taken as an endorsement of Father Eddie." The hierarchy can't back him, can't condemn him, can't abandon him.

On the supporters side are the "50 priests and pastors" reported to have joined Father Eddie's bench. Likewise the priests and lay leaders who finally agreed, in consultations, to field an "alternative moral choice" for the "next Church officer against the political impasse to the province.

And overwhelming to his support of the Pampanga folk in such gambling manner and kind" are those for him by "professionals, students, elderly housewives", "local, elderly, executives, pastors, lawyers, writers, and known sportsmen" etc. The municipal and with dinners arranged, and in approximately 3,000 reliable Easter Sunday intercessions according. H. Edmerson. How they were made "good leaders to emerge."

But let's look at what Father Eddie himself says. "I notice as a priest becoming the minister to public office," laureates Randy David paraphrases Father Eddie "just not a political role as clergy and commissioner of his ministry for the poor." In the words "ministry" and "commission" for a him or a signal of yet another priest campaigning against declaration and moving toward the Senate. In part of his flesh and changing a mindset that temporarily and spiritual.

"He shouldn't run," a priest counsels. "He took a vow to serve that," the priest continued, gesture, losing to indicate the Church, "and here he means this," the political arena. "Precisely!" I answered. "Priest" and "vow" are "terms" where they flow into each other, and in other like these, they are bound so how I don't think he was convinced.

Perhaps, in comfortable and charitable parlance, body and soul, etc., can be kept apart. Priests are still say "hanging this job or withdraw or as priests of the people." Perhaps they should. This is in the vast grass roots of Asia and Africa, the Philippines included, where the demands for justice have become the more compelling than the demands for sweet love. The mission must be to feed.

What after all is the answer? As Michael Skolnik in *World Mission Magazine* puts it, it is "something more than saving souls and planting churches ... a mission encompass relief and development ... It is reaching down arenas of social injustice and violence." It is changing systems, greater social systems and people's attitudes. It is how which is answers to itself in action for justice."

Father Eddie's action is concrete, but as a rite symbols and attitudes he is trying to change, so is not the only one on the line. The Church in society are I suppose would tell you the Parable of the Seed in the Good. But there is no more space.

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After the election, the deluge

"POLITICAL SOVEREIGNTY" MAY "COMMAND respect" may be slightly less distant-sounding phrase that "by hook or crook," but as the international money pie chart shows, the former can bring population today cares its host-current such into the horseshoe money pie that is our national treasury, it would be good to ask, where is all this money going?

It will go, of course, to pay the debt (incurred from the time of the Marcos dictatorship, to the time of Aquino, Ramos and Estrada administrations) and the loans of the present government—which were taken on the gamblery assumption that the Arroyo administration had to spend like a sailor to get itself elected in 2004, after which it could make a giant productive about-turning the fiscal ratios it used abandoned. The fiscal direction has been reversed to health but at the cost of other programs that have suggested they're going to die.

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After the May elections, the administration heads into the homestretch of its term. The first, term has signaled that she is going to embark on another gamble, pouring billion like 21 "priority projects" into the 2004 budget. (See "Arroyo's 2004 gear can read the tortured tea at http://www.gov.ph/news/default.asp?i=12815—pr0704-15.htm—Mar. Certainly, her administration can be expected to pioneer those programs vigorously in many manner that represent plum-eating back, in order to win the confidence of investors, that represent the traditional means by which the achievement of presidents are assessed and judged; they represent patronage benefits; and of course, they are genuinely helpful to the many.

The President has had a headache on her hand, however, in the case of the multipurpose project the Subic and Clark. A 383-day resolution has been sought by one of the project's two Japanese contractors due to right-of-way encroachment. The Japanese government has also urged the Philippine Subway for the Development of Central Luzon to swing fast. "The whole world is looking [at] how we do major infrastructure projects. If those are not laden with controversies or affirmed by

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

politics, those are hounded by doubts." He added, "Government should act fast on the SCTEx and avoid the message: We're really ready to do business."

The builders of the supermoney reported at least 2,400 days of delay in the 10 km project in Bataan and Pampanga, not only because of right-of-way problems, but also because of the lack assistance of the "value-added tax payment scheme, the approval of the use of some scenic materials and the quarry controversy at the Bonavista Exterior Park.

These are problems any administration juggling a similar project would probably face. This and other projects put together are the kind that are subject to the "pump-priming" effect of spending by the national, and in some, interest. In other words, both existing and new projects reflect a desire to leave a tangible mark on both the political and economic landscape, but they also represent a need that is, in many ways, extraordinary. Having survived challenges to its mandate, the administration now has to produce results. Its standing before the people and its supporters, particularly senatorial candidates, is at stake.

What is not at stake is the campaign theme used by administration candidates, namely "continuity from politics," even at their most ferocious, opponents of the administration do not make a thing of Administration's promise it would be political in order to do so. But this also means that responsibility for the success or failure of these projects lies in line with the administration.

As it stands in late three years, it will be hard pressed to complete what's already initiated and money all the possible delays in order to get the credit for whatever is managed to finish by 2010. The eventual one to the administration's claim that it promises effective governance comes from at a time when it will be saddled by no fault of its own. On the other hand, the politicians will be stamping his payback for the support they gave over the past years, and the administration will have to spend more, millions to owing to the term-ending spending leading up to the elections.

If all it has to give back were old political debts, the administration would most likely carry it off with aplomb by 2010. But it has fewer debts to incur, compounding the political debts from the past three years, which it has no hope paying back in earnest. The President can't come home to Glorietta the President must face. If she is to be true to her word, that her only interest is in stopping down peacefully, leaving a human lesser all does it was when she assumed office, she must do her very best to make it so.

Alexander Hamilton once observed, "In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself."

By what means are the governed to be controlled? And by what means is the government to be obliged to control itself?

The past three years have shown that the government can be controlled by means of intimidation, and by appealing to their opinions or fear. But the government has shown little inclination to control itself. Instead, it has set out to defining every contentious issues as being it is in line for the people's interest, and the interest, the press. But it can never win real victory or achieve total mastery. An opposition Senate will bear likely be elected. This leaves salvation in the hands of an administration controlled House, and leaves wide open the temptation, if the legislative agenda does not change in any fundamental change, as the ultimate payback on the President's supporters and not the measure to keep her from being a lame duck. But it will mean paying the interest on projects in peril.

Love and money at the World Bank

LAST FRIDAY THE 12TH WAS A BAD DAY FOR PAUL Wolfowitz, outlawed president of the World Bank. Finance ministers from the wealthy Group of Seven (G-7) nations were meeting in Washington, D.C. This was followed over the weekend by the annual World Bank-International Monetary Fund meetings of ministers from 183 member nations worldwide. On their agenda were the continuing fight against poverty and the implementation of the living standards that depend.

REVELLE

Ramon J. Farolan

But going by the canon of news, items from Washington, D.C., the talks against poverty were overshadowed by

one: revelations of how the president of the world Bank personally rose to it due his girlfriend, Shaha Ali Riza, a World Bank employee, ended up being rewarded to the US State Department with a salary higher than that of Secretary of State Colin Powell.

The old saying "love is blind" was never truer. Jewish boy falls in love with Arab girl. If we had more romance entanglements between Jews and Arabs, perhaps the Palestine problem would be closer to some kind of solution.

The issue still in the dark, this is the story.

In June 1995, Wolfowitz, the neoconservative intellectual architect of the Iraq war, was transferred from the US Department of Defense as the presidency of the World Bank. Days after his prediction as the bank was home to deal with his girlfriend, Riza, who was working as assistant director and when with the bank's Middle East Department. Bank rules prohibit employees from supervising anyone with whom they had a personal relationship. And so, Riza was detailed to the State Department although her pay still came from the World Bank.

Somehow, I find the implementation of this rule difficult to understand and appreciate. If Riza's pay was from the World Bank, certainly her friend at the bank would still have a lot of say regarding her status and compensation package (which is even more important than any supervisory role). And since Riza is a Muslim and a native of Iraq, Wolfowitz sent instructions to the bank's vice president for human resources: "I now direct you to agree to a proposal which includes the following terms and conditions, except Ms Riza's office or be detailed to no outside institution of her choosing while remaining bank-paid employee." He should also request the State Department to charge of $180,000 and get no annual pay increase all it possess."

Before the State Department assignment, Riza was getting close to $130,000. After her detail, her salary rose to $193,590, according to the Government Accountability Project, a watchdog group.

This whole thing is amazing: How could the president of the World Bank put down it a formal memo all of these arrangements for the benefit of his girlfriend? Were rules on policy or was he blinded by passion?

* * *

Just a few issues on Wolfowitz.

When I was posted to Jakarta after the Edsa revolution, Wolfowitz was in his last year as ambassador to Indonesia. We lived a block away from each other along Jakarta's diplomatic row on Jalan Imam Bonjol and enjoyed tennis games as his residence on Wolfowitz's spacious tennis court.

Before his Jakarta assignment, Wolfowitz served as the Assistant Secretary for East Asia and Pacific Affairs at the State Department under the elder Bush. In this position, he played a key role in supporting the Philippines' powerful United Nations bloc opposition.

In the movie "Fahrenheit 9/11," Bob Woodward narrates how at one time after the Iraq invasion, Wolfowitz was on a short list of candidates for the post of presidential envoy to Iraq. The office was there like a super administrator or even a viceroy.

In a position paper titled "Why the presidential envoy should be Deputy Sec Wolfowitz," Steve Berlin, who served as then Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as personal manager, suggested that "Wolfowitz, being Jewish & native, is a reminder that this is not a war against religion, it is a clear signal that the position is completely that the former ambassador to the second largest Muslim nation has experience in being extremely sensitive."

In the end, Wolfowitz was not selected. The White House was concerned that a Jewish viceroy in an Arab country would be difficult to justify. In addition, the President knows that Wolfowitz did not have a strong reputation as a manager. He was a thinker but he could hardly run his office."

Perhaps, this gives us a clue as to why he mishandled actually what was essentially a personal problem.

* * *

The Economist put things in the right perspective: "In the common scale of human wrongs, striking your own boss your girlfriend's pay deal does not weigh much—certainly taken set against the corruption that Mr. Wolfowitz would like the bank to fight. But to the common man in the right one's own backyard, it is the sort of thing that can make the bank's lending more effective by ousting off grabby borrowers. However, that means he should have placed himself above suspicion."

The Financial Times weighed in with its own conclusion: "The World Bank deserves a leader with a well-grounded knowledge of how practice incorporate governance in every single of conditions. As long as Mr. Wolfowitz stays, the can be neither required nor forgiven. He is outside the bank or inside it in the interests of the Bank itself, he should resign. If he does not, the Board must ask him to go."

The Economist doesn't look on bright for Mr. Wolfowitz.

* * *

Last Saturday, Holly and Roxanne Bolo Cuesta hosted a lovely evening of Russian songs and poetry in honor of Dr. Irina Volgin-Ramos, Lydia Volgin's daughter-in-law and the 11th president of the University of the East. Both Rosalie and President Zarina came from Dingras, Ilocos Norte and enjoy close family ties.

A UE Chemistry graduate (cum laude) of the University of the Philippines, Lydia holds a Ph.D. in organic chemistry from Oklahoma State University and a Master of Laws degree, honoris causa, from De La Salle University in 1999. She served as chair of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and, during her tenure, established the policy of economy for tertiary training institutions.

The new UE president is married to Dr. Arnold Gavia, chair of the Physics Department of the Ateneo University.

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Exporting the best

LETTERS

'Sorry' for comment

No poison from toxic algae in cultured fish

People's champ bucks cut, knocks out Mexican

From page A1

crowd of 14,750 to overwhelm, Pacquiao looked upward, motioned a prayer of thanks before raising his arms triumphantly.

"This victory is not only for myself but for my country," Pacquiao said in a television interview. "I only want to make the people happy."

The 28-year-old Pacquiao, who raised his record to 41 wins, 34 by knockout, against three losses and two draws, clubbed his fifth straight Mexican scalp after Mexican Walmigo, Erik Morales, Oscar Larios and Morales again in the finals of their trilogy on Nov. 18 last year.

Though Pacquiao's victory elicited boos and catcalls from his predominantly Latino crowd, many of those later joined the long queue snaking the Filipino boxing superstar's autograph.

'No excuse'

Avila, who suffered his first defeats after 33 wins, 23 by knockout, and two draws, later apologized for failing to salvage Mexican pride.

"I came very close to giving you a good fight, but I just couldn't take his punches," Avila said in Spanish. "I lost a great championship.

"No excuse. He's very fast, very clever and counters right at you."

While Pacquiao's victory evoked impressions to the contrary, his two cousins—Freddie Roach and Aurora Pacquiao—were unconfident, saying that Pacquiao was "toying around."

"It was only when he got hit that he started serious," said Pacquiao, who momentarily took over Roach's role when the celebrated trainer left for Puerto Rico to supervise Mexican great Oscar de La Hoya's training for his May 5 megabout showdown against Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Avila, who at 5-foot-8 1/2 towered over Pacquiao, kept the 10-pound bar with his longer reach.

The headbutt occurred when Pacquiao lunged toward Avila in the middle of the ring and the referee halted the fight while the ring doctor examined the cut.

When the fight resumed, Pacquiao, clearly upset, went at him with both hands and by then experts knew it was only a matter of time before the Mexican would fall.

"I decided to quit fooling around and go finish the fight," said the fast-rising two-time world champion, who reports said will probably earn in the vicinity of $7 million for his efforts.

Aside from the estimated $4 million ($1 million purse, Pacquiao stands to receive about $2 million more from his share in the pay-per-view income. Pacquiao was earlier given $800,000 by Solar Sports in exchange for exclusive TV rights of the fight.

In a post-fight interview, Pacquiao said he expects to fight again in September against welterweight WBC super featherweight champion José Manuel Marquez or Barrera.

WBC president Jose Sulaiman had already ruled that Marquez, who battled three knockdowns in the first round to earn a draw with Pacquiao in their first meeting in 2004, must stage a mandatory defense against the Filipino later in the year or early in 2008.

Pacquiao, who is returning home this Tuesday said he would save concentrate on his bid for the long-longtemented seat in the first district of South Cotabato.

Other bouts

Earlier, Filipino-American Brian Viloria failed in the crucial rounds and lost to a fiery Edgar Sosa by a majority decision in their showdown for the vacant WBC light flyweight championship.

Failing to live up to his promise to bring the fight to Sosa, Viloria was outpunched by the Mexican, 989-946, who dominated from the ninth to the 12th round and prevailed on s 116-114, 115-113, 115-113 majority decision.

"He stepped up in the championship rounds," said Viloria. "That spelled the difference."

His second defeat in his last three world title fights pulled down Viloria's record to 29-2-2 and put serious doubts on his capability to recapture the title he yielded to Mexican Omar Nilo Salinez last year. Salinez, after forging a controversial draw against Viloria in their rematch, was stripped of the title after scoring positive for a banned substance.

Gramo Miljoro entered out a masterful demolition of fellow Filipino Jorge Arce to keep his WBC super flyweight championship in spectacular fashion.

Ignoring the pain which caused it in the second round when he hit the brass with a straight and an uppercut, the 1A-year-old Concepcion earned the nod of the judges, 97-93, 96-94, 97-93 on scores (1, 1, 1 with 11 knockouts.

Concepcion looked an injured right hand to retain the WBC fourth super bantamweight crown by unanimous decision.

Ignoring the pain which caused it in the second round when he hit the brass with a straight and an uppercut, the 1A-year-old Concepcion earned the nod of the judges, 97-93, 96-94, 97-93 on scores (1, 1, 1 with 11 knockouts.

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CONVERGYS honored as "Employer of the Year"

Convergys VP & Country Manager Marife Zamora with Finance Director Aldrin Dulig and HR Director Anna Villarosa

Each year, hundreds of companies all over the Philippines vie for recognition in the prestigious PEZA Awards, an Awards Night organized by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority to commend organizations that have accomplished outstanding performance in exports, generated the most number of jobs, given utmost value to employee welfare, maintained harmony between labor and management, and had a strong engagement with community and environmental affairs.

As the world's fastest growing destination for Business Process Outsourcing, we have witnessed most of this outstanding growth from the Philippine contact center industry since 2000. Convergys Corporation, one of the world's leading providers of outsourced customer care services, started in the Philippines with an 800-strong workforce in one location back in 2003. Today, they have 10,500 employees across 7 locations—and we're still growing.

After just being awarded the **2006 ICT Employer of Year Award** and designation as one of **Fortune's Most Admired Companies** for the seventh year running, Convergys has also won in two PEZA 2006 Awards categories: **PEZA Employer of the Year (Large Enterprise Category)** for the second year in a row, as well as **2006 PEZA Outstanding Exporter**. It is Convergys' commitment to share the fruits of its success with its employees.

"Our mission is simple yet effective"**, says Marife Zamora, VP and Country Manager of Convergys. **"to attract the best and the brightest people, and to help them build a career within Convergys".

A Boost up the Corporate Ladder

At Convergys, even rear-hires are recognized for their potential by being enrolled in the Convergys Academy, a 12-15 day training program for applicants who are given the opportunity to improve their communication skills and eventually be hired into the organization. An agent's career path is closely monitored to expedite progression into more challenging leadership roles, as the agent is given the option to progress vertically or horizontally. No matter how he or she chooses to advance, the path to being a team leader and thereafter, manager, is easily traversed with an abundance of leadership courses and training programs to help employees succeed. "At Convergys, they tell you that this is where you are and this is where we want you to go. And we will not only tell you how to get there, we will hold your hand until you get to that destination," says Red Perez, a Convergys Training Manager.

Marife Zamora, Convergys VP and Country Manager (photograph by Raul J. Bernardo)

Convergys in the Philippines aims to be a "seamless organization with the lowest attrition in the Philippine contact center industry and the best in quality and cost structure in Convergys." This is an indication that retention of our people is our key success factor. Convergys therefore invests in the ***career and professional development*** of its employees, preferring internal promotions over hiring external applicants and paying for performance. Aspiring leaders are enrolled into the Management Development Program (MDP) and become full-fledged Team leaders immediately upon certification. Team Leaders undergo 1-2 month programs to equip them with the necessary skills needed in their new roles as mentors and coaches to groups of diverse individuals. Outstanding team leaders are recognized for their talent by being selected for the Operations Manager Development Program, wherein those certified immediately become Operations Managers upon graduation. Managers become senior managers, who in turn become directors, and after that, anything is possible. With the amount of support received by employees of all levels, it is really no wonder why Convergys in the Philippines has the highest employee commitment and satisfaction rating across all sites in the region.

The Convergys One building located in the heart of Makati City's business district

Convergys management is dedicated to helping people find career satisfaction, not just finding jobs. The difference between the two is enormous. Inasmuch as compensation and benefits are competitive to other players in the industry, Convergys offers unparalleled propositions to all employees. Its management has just released its plan to provide employees with a high-yield retirement package, employee stock purchase plan, and more compelling incentive schemes, among others. This is Convergys' way of giving thanks to each and every employee whose individual hard work and dedication has contributed to the company's shared success.

Our People Our Success

According to Ivo Meeus, VP for Operations, "Convergys is not its technology or structures. Convergys is its people." The company's pride is in its rich resources of exceptionally talented people from all walks of life. Diversity contributes to a stronger, more exciting team environment and is an important source of perspectives, opportunities, and relationships for the business. Convergys is committed to making the company one in which all individuals are encouraged to flourish and succeed, regardless of their background, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. Such an environment makes Convergys not only a better place to work, but also better able to meet the needs of its clients.

And finally, most notable is that Convergys is the only foreign-owned call center in the country which has an **all-Filipino executive committee room**. The 10,500 Convergys employees in the Philippines are delivering high performing capabilities not only for the love of Convergys but more so for the love of country. As a leader in an industry where the product is the skill and capabilities of people, Convergys' tremendous growth is testament to its clients' recognition of the exceptional performance delivered by 10,500 Filipinos.

Marife Zamora is welcomed as a Filipino corporate leader while she represents Convergys and addresses the ICT community

Across the NATION

ARMM bet seeks new canvass venue

SULTAN KUDARAT, SHARIFF KABUNSUAN—A gubernatorial aspirant has petitioned the Commission on Elections to use Cotabato City as its canvassing venue instead of the provincial capital town of Datu Odin Sinsuat (DOS) to ensure a clean, honest and violence-free proceedings.

Sultan Kudarat Mayor Teves Mastura, petsal against incumbent Gov. Rebbo Dimaat and former Administrative Region to Mus. Dr. (Mastura) Gov. Jacinto Cotabato, cited shortcoming of election in DOS would be meaningless if possible irregularities once it is a Simuat-controlled venues.

"Besides, DOS (as Shariff Kabunsuan's seat of government) has no provincial capital," said Mastura of the predicament of provincial employees holding office at the town hall.

"This is not conducive to the holding of orderly honest and fair canvassing by the provincial board of canvassers," the mayor said.

Cotabato, a component city of Maguindanao's first district which is now Shariff Kabunsuan, is a "neutral ground" as a canvassing venue, said Mastura, whose political backbone is in the town of Sultan Kudarat.

Created by Republic Act 9054 enacted by the ARMM legislative assembly, Shariff Kabunsuan has his mark. Then vice governor of Maguindanao province, he was appointed by Administrator Jaafar Ampatuan to preside over the province the new province.

Mastura said his request before the Comelec is not new. "This was done before in Lanao del Sur, Sulu and other provinces, where contending parties petitioned for the transfer of canvassing to the city or urban areas to preserve the sanctity of the ballots," Mastura said.

ARMM Commissioner-in-charge Bora Inamodin is set to meet with local poll officials led by regional director Atty. Inamodin this week to resolve Mastura's petition. —Charlie Sultana, Inquirer Mindanao

ELEKSYON 2007

Pastors in Baguio turn into political critics on TV

BAGUIO CITY—LOCAL PREACHERS HAVE launched a television network that helps voters understand local politics, as the city prepares to choose its leaders among nine mayoral candidates and more than 50 aspirants for the city council.

Since November 2006, Mission Television has been sending videos free to congregations that wish to show them, provided they have opportunities to present a Christian perspective on politics, said Rolando Joseph Quilala, the local network's founder.

Quilala, Voltaire Acosta, Bienvenido Lopez and eight other pastors have encountered the television ministry's potential in preaching issues with The Bataan Pilipinas party-list led by Rep. Edwardo "Eddie" Villanueva. In 2004, they criticized Villanueva for refusing to admit defeat in the presidential election.

Lopez said the 13 pastors have doubled as reporters and political analysts and will "contemplate and edit" to encourage Filipinos to participate in nation building without ordering the elected ups as called the church religious.

Quilala said some viewers were unaware of Mission TV's Christian orientation. He said they would be invited to open its doors to faiths with which most evangelical groups have "negative differences."

Quilala noted the slogan "Tao Viste that Builds" to market Mission TV as "an alternative channel," unlike another evangelist network.

"We are committed, yes, but here we stop being preachers on camera, when we do—it's the role of the church and state to no-

Relatives of slain vice gov appeal to tribes not to resort to violence

TARLAC, BALIWAG—RELATIVES OF SLAIN Vice Gov. Romeo Dizon have appealed to rival tribes in Kalinga to honor the judicial process and not resort to violence following the officials' murder on April 7.

Dizon, 58, who was running for governor under the Lakas-CMD, was shot dead in Bontigao Mayor's Inn to be sen delivering a speech. He was buried in the family's farm in Bontigao Uling after a two-hour Mass at the United Church of Christ in the Philippines church here on Saturday.

"We ask everyone to seek justice through the court's and avoid tribal conflicts," Presbitia Dizon, the vice governor's widow, said.

Floralda accused the rapper after the police and the members was entitled to a conflict between rival tribes in the province.

The police are exploring the tribal war angle because the 18-year-old suspect is from the Mapaos-Gallayan community and Dizon's funeral has to do in the Bulanao cogs community.

The police have yet to arrest the suspect.

Police said the suspect was sent by strike to retaliate for the Aug. 9, 2004 murder of Judge Milan Lumawan of Kalinga.

Confident police officials said they consult rival tribes in Kalinga when investigators reached that conclusion, but Tabuk Mayor Camille Lumawan Jr., the judge's brother, said the tribal war angle was farfetched.

The police have not explained how Dizon, a lawyer and a former judge, ever was employed in Judge Lumawan's matter.

Meanwhile, Dizon's daughter, said she was hoping that her father's death would serve as a "unifying force" to stop tribal conflicts and entice feuding tribes to the provinces.

"To the Bontigao-ang and the Gallayan tribes, do not [start] war ... we should not fight, let us help each other in seeking justice for my father," she said.

At least 2,000 residents and supporters attended the funeral, and local bar topnotch, library of Hunt were others that have by photos, to "Justice for Romeo Dizon" and "We died for the people and his principles."

In his homily during the Mass, Rev. Stephen Dizon was asked Dizon's relatives to "look into Godin there and possible instead of revenge."

Junior Supt. Jocelyn Uyap, Kalinga police director, said he has alerted his men to prepare for any incident that may arise from Dizon's murder.

Dilomar Unaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

ROOTING FOR PACQUIAO

Independent senatorial candidate Ronald "Bong" Dizon celebrates with Bonggo fans the victory of Manny Pacquiao in the WBC superfeatherweight boxing championship. Pacquiao reached the fight in a pay-per-view channel in Bonifacio Global City.

Bacolod lawmaker faces complaint for P8-M fertilizer purchase in '04

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THE CITY HALL filed a complaint before the Office of the Ombudsman against Rep. Monico Puentevella for his alleged failure to account for the purchase of 8K mailbox worth of liquid fertilizer in 2004.

City Legal Officer Allen Zamora Jr. based his complaint on a finance report in March 2006 showing that Puentevella was among the congressmen who received the fertilizer fund.

Puentevella could not be reached for comment. His media officer, Eric Tinarelo, said the case would fail because all of the allegations were based on hearsay.

The nearly P9-billion fertilizer fund released by the Department of Agriculture during the 2004 election was believed to have been diverted to congressmen, mayors and governors allied with President Macapagal-Arroyo, according to the Senate, "a portion of the money mysteriously ended up in the hands of dummy private foundations and companies" and eventually "exploded in the Arroyo campaign."

Only 1,147 liters

Zamora said the comparative schedules of liters implements, based on the Special Allotment Release Order issued by the Department of Budget and Management, showed that Puentevella delivered only 1,147 liters of foliar fertilizer.

He said liters for the 8K mailbox who testified on the issue before the house committee on agriculture and the blue ribbon committee, claimed that he informed Puentevella that he had P8 million from the GSS to buy fertilizer, but the lawmaker wanted 25 percent of it in fertilizer and the remaining 75 percent in cash.

Zamora said he received a letter from Narciso San Miguel on March 26, stating that Puentevella received P8 million from the DA for the purchase of foliar liquid fertilizer in 2004.

However, in an affidavit dated Nov. 22, 2006, Buendo claimed that Puentevella allegedly personally got about P6 million out of his liquid fertilizer allocation.

Zamora said records from the department's regional office showed that only a meager 1,147 one-liter bottles of liquid fertilizer had been distributed to several individuals, whose names appeared to be either unrelated or falsified to the liquidation report.

He named Margarita Gonzales, chair of Barangay 28, and Patrick Habli, Sangguniang Kabataan chair of Barangay 26. They volunteered during the interview Lany Ilagid fertilizer from Puentevella's office.

MOP Foundation

Zamora said the 86 page Commission on Audit report on the P728 million GMA Farm Input Fund, from which the liquid fertilizer Fund stems, indicated no irregularities in the purchase made by the MOP Foundation. Some of the foundation's incorporators are members of Puentevella's family and close associates.

The MOP is believed to stand for Monico Oging Puentevella, the late Bacolod Councilor, he said.

The COA also reported that the MOP Foundation bought fertilizer for P3 million when the actual cost should have been only P240,000, or an overprice of P2.76 million, Zamora said.

The group claimed it bought 2,400 one-liter bottles of foliar fertilizer for Bacolod farmers for P1,250 each, he said. But COA investigators discovered that the one liter bottles should have cost only P1.00 each.

Zamora said the way these 2,400 bottles were actually distributed remained a mystery. The agriculture department's regional office reported that only 1,147 bottles of such fertilizer were distributed and screened, not from the P3 million given to the MOP Foundation, but from the P6 million allocation of Puentevella, he said.

Puentevella has to account for a total of at least P8.276 million out of the P11 million fund released to him and the foundation, Zamora said.

The lawmaker's media liaison officer Tinarelo said Zamora had not notified the authenticity of the statements of Buendo and San Miguel.

"The statements of San Miguel was based on the statement of Buendo, so how can Zamora attest to the truth of all this ... facts about he does not even know Buendo?" he asked.

Tinarelo confirmed that the MOP Foundation exists and that it would issue a statement and defend itself in the proper court.

PAMBANSIT ACTS CONTEMPLATING HOW TO STOP THE ATTACK of a silent performer during the street dancing competition of Sarandag's 5th Pandan Festival in Hupaniden, Pangasinan

ROUNDUP

Tuguegarao native now a bishop

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Bishop Ricardo Baccay, the first Tuguegarao native to become a bishop, was ordained by Papal Nuncio Fernando Filoni at the Cuneta Pitner area Pontifical Minor Basilican Cathedral Shrine on April 10. Baccay, native of the San Jacinto community here, is the second Tuguegarao priest to be named bishop by Pope Benedict XVI. The first, Bishop Rodolfo Beltran, is now assigned in Bontoc, Mt. Province. Baccay, a son of farming parents, was ordained priest in 1981 by Tuguegarao Archbishop Teodulfo Valenzuela.

Inquirer Northern Luzon

Man found dead at riverbank

TUGUEGARAO CITY—A man was found dead at the bank of the Pinacanauan River in Barangay Centro 10 here on Easter Sunday. Police said the body of Joel Langaya, 48 laundry Pahilidan Norte, bore at least 20 stab wounds and two bullet wounds. Reports said Langaya, stayed with a resident of Centro 10 and took him to their house in the early Dodan, Peñablanca. However, the girl's parents found them downstairs and went to Langaya's house to fetch their daughter. Police said Langaya was last seen alive after his encounter with the girl's parents. Prosecutor Teodulo Albano, Barangay chair of Centro 10, said police failed to find the girl and her relatives in the village when Langaya was found dead. The National Bureau of Investigation has joined the search for the girl's relatives, who were suspected of involvement in the murder, Albano said.

Inquirer Northern Luzon

Mass grave found in Apayao

CAMP MELCHOR DELA CRUZ, Isabela—Soldiers and policemen on Sunday unearthed skulls and skeletal remains, believed to belong to 13 villagers reportedly executed by communist rebels between 1985 until 1989, in Flora, Apayao. Col. Roberto Macatono, 5th Infantry Brigade commander based in Tabuk, Kalinga, said a relief operation led authorities to the grave in a forested area in Sitio Bagalibean, Barangay Bgao in Poblad. Macatono said the bones, identified as one Kolibet, was apparently among those who abducted and killed the victims in the 1980s. He said castes of clothes and shoes and other belongings were found among the remains. Macatono said the man had told them that the people were killed because they were suspected to be military spies in the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army. He said Kolibet used to belong to the NPA regional security committee operating in Cagayan, Apayao, Kalinga, Ilocos Norte and Isabela in the 1980s.

Alfonso Khayo Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

3 Abu Sayyaf suspects killed

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Three suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf were killed in a clash with government soldiers in Barangay Guiyam in Patikul, Sulu, on Saturday morning, a Marines soldier was wounded in the 30-minute clash. Lt. Col. Bruce Hecina, commander of the Marine Battalion Landing Team-5, said the Abu Sayyaf bandits, numbering about 30, were led by Jul Asiri. Hecina identified the wounded soldier as Pfc. Evans Rabacutin. Wounded was immediately airlifted to Lamitan City and then to the U. Lino Medical Center in Cagayan City.

Julie J. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

Boat tilts; 4 dead

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Three children and an adult drowned after the motorized boat they were riding sank Wednesday off the Maitas Port on Balut Island in Sarangani town. Diane del Sur, 10; Sotomita Sheila Caballero, social welfare officer of Sarangani, identified the fatalities were Lakiyang Sindaang, 10; Mary Grace Mateo, 3; Tina Pagalang, 3; and Ervin Grace Saquino, 2. Mayor Jerry Cano said only three bodies were recovered. He said the MB Flatus picked up passengers of a ferryboat that sank off its way back to General Santos. Cano said the boat tilted when it was about to leave the port at past 9 p.m. Arresting all 150 passengers off the coast ensured that passengers were back to the port.

Ayalen Zaide, Inquirer Mindanao

SC backs employee in Silliman retirement case

University ordered to give nurse separation pay, back wages for 8 years

By Alan Piz
Inquirer Visayas

DUMAGUETE CITY—THE SUPREME Court has upheld a labor arbiter's decision declaring illegal the premature retirement of a Silliman University (SU) employee.

The High Court also ordered the university to pay separation and back wages for eight years to an employee it had retired in 1999.

Jacelbe was retired based on SU's retirement plan, which considered the automatic retirement of full-time employees who had served continuously for 25 years or who had reached 60 years of age.

Jacelbe, who was only 37 at the time she was retired, said the compulsory retirement was tantamount to dismissal.

She asked Silliman that she be allowed to work until the age of 65, the minimum age at which she could qualify for 100 pensions, but the university denied this request, citing "company policy."

The university said Jacelbe had voluntarily contributed to the retirement plan through monthly salary deductions.

The university also said that many others had been retired through this plan and no questions or disagreements had been raised until Jacelbe was retired.

Jacelbe filed a complaint in the Regional Labor Relations Commission. A labor arbiter found SU guilty of illegal dismissal and ordered that Jacelbe be reinstated with paid full back wages.

On appeal by the university, the NLRC reversed the labor arbiter's decision and dismissed the complaint for lack of merit.

NLRC decision

It also denied the motion for reconsideration filed by Jacelbe. The Court of Appeals later affirmed the NLRC decision.

In reversing the Court of Appeals ruling, the Supreme Court said that while the Labor Code permits employers and employees to fix the applicable retirement age at below 60 years, the rules and regulations of the Silliman retirement plan showed that participation was not voluntary at all.

The plan automatically covered all of the university's full-time Filipino employees, who could not withdraw from the plan while they continued to serve the university. The Supreme Court pointed out in its decision penned by Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago.

Retirement plan

While the Court of Appeals ruled that the retirement plan had been in effect for more than 30 years, it did not point out that it only came into being in 1970 or 13 years after Jacelbe started working for the university, the High Court said.

In short, it was no part of the terms of employment to which petitioner agreed when she started working for respondent," the decision said.

The court said there was no agreement, collective or otherwise, to justify the imposition of the son's retirement age in Silliman's retirement plan.

Jacelbe "had no choice but to participate in the plan, given that the only way she could refrain from doing so was to resign or lose her job," the high court added.

Jose Roold Montalvo, university legal counsel, said Silliman had yet to receive a copy of the Supreme Court decision. "We will receive our remedies when we receive our copy," Montalvo said.

CORN DRYING
A boy dries corn kernels to be made into a snack food called "cornik." Cauayan City, famous for is among the top producers of flavor/ sweet and cream/sour corn ids.
JOVEN BARRIA, INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Abducted militant leader freed in Cavite

THE LEADER OF AN URBAN POOR federation has been released unhurt in front of a shopping mall in Tanza on the town's Governor Tuesday night, eight days after four armed men seized her.

Three men on board a van left Loretho Ibabao near SM City Bacoor, a few kilometers from her home in Barangay San Nicolas 2, at around 11 p.m.

Ibabao, known as Nanay Ido in colleagues, is the president of the Urgong Mahabla sa Adlaw sa Tanza 2 (Ungol) Federation, a chapter of the militant urban poor group Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (Kadamay) in Cavite.

She was said to be taken while eating after attending her group's activity on April 3.

Relatives and friends of Ibabao ordered the three members found in Bernardo de Bano in Lipa City of being behind the abduction.

Jean Ayuyao, Ibabao's daughter, said her mother was able to pick up a piece of paper while the van being held in a small room and immediately kept it inside her pocket.

"She would Philippine Air Force, Lipa City" was written on the paper," Ayuyao said in a phone conversation.

She said her mother was threatened by her armed and undressed armed men.

Except for wounds in her elbows, Ibabao did not suffer any other injury, Ayuyao said.

"We really cannot understand why the military did this to my mother. She's just an old woman and a leader fighting for what it was and just," she lamented.

After her abduction, heard her into the van (SFB 606), blindfolded her and drove the van for at least four hours, Ayuyao quoted her mother as saying.

By that time, the van already had their license plates removed.

Ibabao was reportedly asked about personalities belonging to progressive groups, Ayuyao said.

She said the woman was warned that one of her children would also be abducted.

"They put my mother under severe psychological torture," she said.

Ayuyao said that although the family was happy that her mother was not killed, they were still frightened by what could happen to them.

They had already sought the help of Bantamabo Mayor Dale Antonio and other officials "to find justice for my mother," she said.

The family has filed a case against the military before the Commission on Human Rights, she said.

Dimitri Mirlohin, secretary general of the Cavite Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace, lambasted Cavite police director Senior Supt. Ariel Penaflor for accusing Nanay Ido of being involved in land issues in Bantamabo.

Mirlohin lamented that despite the lack of any evidence, "Penaflor had the nerve to make such irresponsible and unfounded accusations."

In an earlier interview, Penaflor downplayed allegations that Ibabao's abduction was linked to her active participation in Ungol and other progressive groups in Cavite.

He claimed that the victim was involved in selling fake land titles.

"Our investigation showed that ... she was involved in a land scam. Her abduction was not caused by her political affiliation but by personal grudge," he said.

But Ayuyao said her mother did not have any personal enemies, except for leaders of the Barangay Council of Alternative Leaders, a group identified with Gov. Ecleto "Boying" Malikse. Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Comelec upholds order voiding Isabela mayor's proclamation

RAMON, ISABELA—THE COMmission on Elections has upheld in first division's resolution declaring the 2004 election win of Mayor Wilfredo Tabag as illegal due to gross irregularities in the manning of election returns.

In an en banc resolution issued on April 12, the Comelec ruled that the proclamation of Tabag was "null and void," and that the votes credited to him were obtained through fraudulent means.

It junked the motion of Mel. Bodo Tabag for being a rehash of the issues raised in his answer and memorandum, which were also rejected by the first division.

A new set of municipal board of canvassers was tasked with convening on April 17 at the session hall of the Comelec main office to reconvene the 41 election returns in Ramon town.

"Clearly Tabag's proclamation is illegal, without authority from the Commission, hence, null and void. Consequently, Tabag's proclamation is hereby annulled," the Comelec ruling said.

A recount was sought by Raymund Espidol, who was ousted as mayor in July but year after losing in an allegedly hotly contested election conducted by the old election board of canvassers headed by Arthur Cortes, election officer of Santiago City.

Aside from Cortes, the board members then were Manuel Castillo and Arnold Vallejo, who the Comelec's first division blamed for the illegal proclamation of Tabag despite irregularities that marred the canvassing of election returns.

With its finding of "totally erroneous, grossly unfounded and clearly fraudulent" election returns, the Comelec en banc supported the first division.

The division resolution said that spurious election returns favoring Tabag were discovered. It said the election returns examined by the board, which was the basis of Tabag's proclamation, did not match the other original copies of the returns that showed Espidol the winner.

The board and Espidol obtained 8,647 votes as against Tabag's 8,681, or a margin of 2,834.

A recount conducted by another board led by Cortes showed that Tabag won with 8,220 votes as against Espidol's 6,016. Mr. Justice Thirza A., Inquirer Northern Luzon

MNLF commander declares 'holy war' on gov't

From page A1

pare 'to make them accountable for their actions.'

Malik said the government had been violating the peace agreement it signed with the MNLF in 1996.

"The government keeps on giving us false statements and assurances, yet behind our backs, the soldiers are attacking us and accusing us of being members of Abu Sayyaf. They (government) are violating the 1996 peace agreement," he said in a phone interview with the Inquirer yesterday.

The MNLF is a former Moro separatist group which signed a peace pact with the government in 1996. It dropped its independence bid and opted for limited self-autonomy in Arabic Mindanao and opted for limited self-autonomy in Arabic Mindanao, was subsequently named governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Maj. Eugene Basco, spokesperson of Western Mindanao Command, said soldiers belonging to the 1st and 2nd Mobile Battalion Landing Teams (MBLT) and MSCTG "officially seized Malik's mansion, the Camp Jabal Ubod in Brgy 19 complex" yesterday morning.

"Malik is now in hiding," Basco said.

Another MNLF camp falls

Aside from Malik's lair, a camp in Barangay Tila in Tuburan town was seized by soldiers yesterday morning, said Maj. Gen. Rodrigo Ballad, Task Force Comet chief.

In February, Malik led homage Marine Maj Gen. Ben Dolorfino and several government peace negotiators for two days in Jolo. He released the officials after securing a pledge from the government that the plight of the jailed Misuari was being closely looked into.

Five years after the government signed an accord with the MNLF, Misuari launched a fresh rebellion after he lost gubernatorial support were alleged rampant.

Misuari's forces attacked government targets in Jolo and nearby Zamboanga City, killing over 100 people. He fled to Malaysia, but was later captured and deported and is now in jail in a police camp south of Manila.

He remains an influential figure in Muslim communities in Mindanao and Malik is a known loyalist of Misuari. The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has been lobbying for his release to attend a meeting in Saudi Arabia in July.

The 57-nation OIC recognizes the MNLF as the sole representative of Muslim minorities in the Philippines.

Misuari adviser confirms jihad

Nasrudin Habib Jiani Ajid, chief of the Bangsa Moro Congress and spiritual adviser to Misuari, confirmed that Malik had declared jihad when "government forces attacked an MNLF camp in Indanan (town last week."

"The military provoked Malik. It is already a religious war. He will no longer stop because we, the MNLF love to die, more than we love to live," Ajid said.

Ajid said two MNLF fighters were killed while another was wounded in Barangay Buanza in Indanan when troops of the 110th Army Brigade attacked the camp of MNLF leader Tahil Sali-mhere Abu Sayyaf leader Radullan Sahiron was reportedly taking shelter.

But Col. Antonio Ingosan, commander of the 1104th Brigade and coordinator with MNLF commanders in Indanan was made before the attack.

"We don't consider the MNLF our enemy, but by action of calling the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) a non-republic," Ingosan said.

Jimmy Jalaidi, an MNLF commander, denied Ingosan's claims, saying that the Abu Sayyaf hadn't been in Barangay Tabiawa, "more six years. That's why we have to move our base our (security to give way to the AFP (military)."

Jalaidi said Addhur's camp was "quite far from where the ASG members were."

"We were just surprised to know that soldiers went so far to Addhur's camp," Jalaidi said.

Mortar fire

Jalaidi said Addhur lost two fighters on Wednesday while Malik had three wounded members when the 2nd Marine Brigade fired mortars into his camp on boundary morning.

Col. Cesar Acierto, commander of the 2nd Marine Brigade, said two soldiers were killed and eight others were wounded.

Antonio said Cpl. Antonio Pe. Jr and Pfc. Arthur Arisandoon were killed when Malik's group fired mortars at their patrol base in Barangay Tayungan, Panamao, on Saturday morning.

The wounded soldiers were identified as Sgt. Levi Sanchez, technical Sergeants Saul Cabe and Willy Dayrit, Corporals Danny Bunyo, Quirino Alcabaza and Erwins Esperanza, and Privates First Class Joey Libon and Mother Lemuchin.

A civilian, identified as Abdulmanan Ampuanan, 35, was killed in the mortal attack on the MBLT 12 headquarters in the village of Lake Sitt in Panamao on Friday night.

Malik group's attack also destroyed a building as the Panamao National High School and the municipal hall.

Thousands displaced

The conflict has forced residents to leave their homes.

Jim Bunker Ambassen of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) covering the provinces of Sulu, Tawi-tawi, said 8,400 families or some 42,000 people were displaced due to the conflict in Tuburan and Panamao.

Most of the evacuees are now in the capital town of Jolo.

Ambassen said Malik's action came as a surprise.

"We were caught by surprise. It happened just in time when we all have established efforts with his group for development projects," he said.

Rafael, the Task Force Comet chief, said he and some of his officers were even frequenting Malik's camp for the implementation of the DPAPP projects, which included livelihood projects for the women and youth.

"He is like a brother to me. He don't have any idea why he is doing this," Rafael said.

Malik has about 400 followers in Bliang, according to Ambassen. There are at least 1,000 MNLF fighters in Sulu.

Al Mujahid Sinsi, MNLF deputy commander for military affairs, confirmed to the Inquirer that his group was maintaining forces in Barangay Longoy, Indanan when Malik staged his jihad.

Rian Alonto De Ali bin Peace Monitoring Group of the government said the MNLF along with Task Force Comet deputy commander Col. Demetrio Ramos.

Rian said he met "several Malik's decision," but would not join him.

Prevent escalation

But Ali said only the OIC could prevent the escalation of war in Sulu, which could spread throughout Mindanao where there are MNLF bases.

"Every member of the Bangsa Moro is supporting Malik. It's hard to stop this unless the OIC will come in," Ali said.

Fr Angel Calvo, executive secretary of the Peace Advocates Zamboanga, said only "top-level national officials" could put an end to the hostilities.

"We are all concerned. But (the) situation requires high-level discussion, assessment and analysis and it should come from high-level leaders from the MNLF, the AFP and the government," Calvo said.

Calvo said there was a need for the military to clarify what it did in Indanan town on Wednesday, "shaming the attack on ASG when it turned out hitting MNLF forces."

Exercise restraint

The government's top peace adviser yesterday called on the military to exercise "due restraint" and "be mindful of the adverse effects on the civilians whenever military operations take place."

Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza described as "unfortunate" the renewed fighting in Sulu.

Dureza said the military action was "not directed at the MNLF as a whole but only against the group of Malik," who, he said, was responsible for a series of attacks on Peace-zone areas.

The peace adviser said he was confident most MNLF elements in other parts of Mindanao, who now live peaceful and productive lives, would not condone the violent acts of Malik. With reports from Michael Lim Ubac in Manila and AFP

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TELEVISION sets for sale at a department store on Carlos Gilrei in Manila offer regular action to commuters. AP/JACK

When boxing ...

From page A1

great Manny Pacquiao and Mexican Jorge Solis plowed their way for a slug- fest reminded of boxing and quickly rounded the ring.

The fight over Hershal Ow Ing Inc. Amateur Coliseum, joined some 5,000 fans in the Cagayan gymnasium in Mandaluyong City with every knockout notch by the time clobbering his foe for one in the South Cotabato General Santos district in the fifty 16 decisions.

Asked what effect Pacquiao's victory in the ring would have on the polls, Gonzales said: "It's up to the people but as far as the political leaders of the city, they will still give him a hero's welcome."

Gonzales could be sure about his self with the rest of the crowd when Pacquiao survived a hard hit to the sixth round to finish off his opponent.

Gonzales said she was happy that Pacquiao had once again brought honor to the country.

The "Star Master" Justice was reportedly dismissed in the last minute of the fight in some 126 minutes around the country.

And while viewers were hesitant to call Pacquiao's Gomez, it's hard shooting winning bouts the big screen caught their attention "Congressman Congressman".

Ostensibly, this just couldn't separate Pacquiao the hoper from Pacquiao the politician.

Two realities

Even boxing writers refused to divorce the two realities in their account of Pacquiao's win.

In Agence France-Presse story on the fight began: "Filipino superstar Manny Pacquiao warmed up for his upcoming election fight Saturday by stopping previously unbeaten Jorge Solis in the seventh round ..."

In article by Thomas Gerbasi at Ringlasing.com labeled the 28-year-old as "the world's toughest politician" before describing his knockout victory as "unpopular presidential champ."

Michael Marley of Boxingscene.Sidenlid.com called the ring judges "weaver" who had Pacquiao winning in their scorecards until he finally knocked out Solis.

The overtones were evident to watch the bout at SM Megamall's appointed happy with the boxer's entrance into politics.

Commercials monitored

"I don't want to applaud because people might think that I'll vote for the macho congressman," Mike Javier said as Pacquiao was being thrown entering the ring.

But others were paying much closer attention to the commercials in between rounds—like lawyer Jimo Gutierrez of the United Opposition.

Gutierrez earlier called the Commission on Elections' attention to the airing of commercials allegedly giving Pacquiao "undue advantage" over his opponents.

The Comelec later gave the go-signal for the live telecast of the match, but barred the showing of Pacquiao's advertisements in the congressional district where he is running.

As of 2 p.m. yesterday, Gutierrez said he had found no grave violation of the Fair Elections Act in terms of media coverage of the bout. He said Comelec's supporters were checking if commercials featuring Pacquiao were being shown in General Santos.

But Gutierrez said his camp would watch the extended replays of the bout.

Politicians everywhere

"If the fight will be replayed for several more days, it will be a different story," he said. "There will be no need for this because everybody knows that Pacquiao has won."

Some politicians took time out from campaigning but others made sure they were seen entering the fight fans' land venues) who watched the telecast of the fight to remind voters to vote around the country.

At the San Andres Sports Complex and Civic Center in Manila, Mayor Lito Atienza—whose son Ali is running for city mayor—joined about 5,000 people in a short prayer for Pacquiao, the "adopted son of Manila," before the fight started.

"Are you happy?" the mayor asked the people. They shouted back, "Yes!"

Atienza had visited the other venues before going to San Andres.

Ali Atienza and his Mayor Dad Bagatsing, his running mate, arrived after the first round of the fight.

Pacquiao will be honored in a motorcade around Manila that he organized by the mayor when he returns home on April 17.

Prayers for Manny

Some politicians in Luzon also took advantage of the fight's coverage with the draw watching it.

Batangueño senator Ralph Recto and allied spoke before some 5,000 people gathered at the Tadahan City convention center.

Presidential Manny, who is seeking re-election but distinct congressional seat, urged the crowd to join him in praying for Pacquiao's triumph. Unsaid: Allied, who is running for Tadahan City senator, said he would stage Pacquiao's fight fight.

The candidates under Allied's lineup also mingled with the crowd, giving out campaign materials.

Among the other politicians who also time fight in the General Santos gymnasium was opposition stalwart Mayor Bebe Acharon Jr.

The city government, with the help of former Mayor Adelbert Antonio Custodio's father, Antonio, also broadcast live telecast of the bout.

Analysts' views

But political analysts said Pacquiao's victory would not automatically translate into an election victory come May.

Ramon Casiple, executive director of the Institute for Political and Electoral Reforms, told the Inquirer: "Remember that many of Pacquiao's fans do not register to vote in the elections. Much will still depend on how he will campaign and how he will use this victory to his advantage."

Political science professor Francisco Nemenzo said: "I don't know the local politics of General Santos but I surmise the people of General Santos know the difference between boxing and lawmaking."

Nemenzo is the leader of the alliance of people's organizations, Labanag Masa.

"He should be a champion of the people and not just of a certain individual," Nemenzo said of Pacquiao, reportedly a friend of President Arroyo. Mayor Bagatsing's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo.

Comelec: Nothing wrong

An official of the Commission on Elections yesterday said he saw nothing wrong with Pacquiao's supporters in Texas campaigning for the boxing champion.

Comelec spokesperson James Arthur Jimenez also said that there was no election violation committed when Pacquiao was introduced during the fight as a congressional candidate.

"It's all part of the hype [for the fight]. You can't prevent that anyway," Jimenez told the Inquirer.

With reports from Allison B. Lopez, Norman Bordadora and Nikko Dizon in Manila; Gap A. Subiela, Carla P. Gomez, Donnel Ismael Ilanan, Jhaemon Dapalilan, Andrei P. Borigas Jr. and Jose Arnulfo Inquirer Visayas; Apollo Jones, Inquirer Mindanao, and AFP

Pacquiao unites Pinoys

From page A1

high-and heart surgery.

Urging Filipinos to "overcome the fear of poverty and injustice," Mr Arroyo said: "Manny stands for the dreams of every Filipino in the ring of life and the arena of the future."

At the San Andres Sports Complex and Civic Center in Manila, a 12 x 16-projector set up inside the stadium gave 5,000 people a "ringside" view of the match.

Outside the spacious air-conditioned complex in Malate, streets were deserted save for police personnel monitoring the area. But inside, the crowd cheered whenever Pacquiao staggered Solis—and whenever the tough girl in a skimpy green bikini was shown on the screen.

Some candidates for councilor and Congress also took the opportunity to shake hands with the spectators.

In the third round, a woman was overheard saying, "Ugh! no guy! si Manny [Manny's sexy expert]," every time Pacquiao's fierce opponent showed off his left hit.

The crowd fell silent in the fifth round when it became Solis' turn to clobber their idol.

Behind Rep. Danilo Ramos, the Manila Police Chief Office during director who was also at the San Andres stadium, reported was time stadium around the time when the telecast the match.

Even churchgoers

At the final proclamation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Quezon City were hearing homilies Mass, others were entertaining silent hungry out at the nearby San Lorenzo Ruiz to they watched the fight.

The crowd, which paid P200 each to witness the telecast, jumped for joy when Solis finally went down.

"I was supported. We would not have accepted any other outcome," parishioner Rogelio Sevilla said.

However, not all souls at the gym were filled—unlike Pacquiao's last fight with legendary Mexican fighter Erik Morales which was also shown in the same venue.

"We were able to sell all the tickets last year. There were even a lot of [prohibitions] who wanted to pay extra just to be able to watch the fight at the gym," Lei Ruiz, a member of the Muslim Studies Guild that organized the event with the Sacred Heart of Jesus parish, told the Inquirer.

A few fans were less than romantic.

Dennis, an office worker from Makati, lined up at Elorde in 1 Saturday night to buy a ticket in advance. He had expected a long queue—but there was none.

On the day of the fight itself, just a fourth of the 4000-seat Cinema 1 was filled, allowing Dennis to pick any seat he liked.

The same was also true in the capacity crowd in the same cinema last year when Pacquiao knocked out Erik Morales in the third round.

Neighborhood bars had a slightly bigger crowd with three-fourths of the cinema full, an informant on-the-spot said.

Monterey after Pacquiao knocked Solis down in the eighth, cheering spot "boo-ed" in Ilocano, a mixed amalgam of an online company and a bank employee selling a Toyota over the phone: "Hero/Mario, you won my VIP."

At one point during the match, a man was heard speaking on the phone, giving someone a blow-by-blow account of the fight, this loud Visayan dialect. Others in the audience looked irked.

In Pasig City, security guards booked in front of a portable blank and white set.

Arthur Bird, a security guard at the Mercury Drug Tower, heard the news of Pacquiao's win in his cellphone.

"Sulit ang kinalood sa in the eighth round!" he told the other guards. "Mabuhay ang Pilipinas!"

It was a virtual holiday in the metro island province of Batanes as the Ivatan joined the rest of the country in cheering for Pacquiao.

A few people are out for the beach but most chose to stay glued to their television sets.

Jessy Bergo-Jimeil her store in Barangay Sabtang to bring home as she could watch the bout.

Leonardo Bonnillero, a candidate for vice mayor in Ivana, said he did not go to the village but he miss the fight.

In Cagayan, candidates campaigning in Tuguegarao City's villages stopped in houses where TV sets were tuned in to the fight.

Boxing was turned at the public market in Tuguegarao.

Some passengers in Tuguegarao were stirred that many tricycle drivers had stopped plying the streets during the bout.

Traffic was light in parts of the Visayas as many preferred to watch the fight.

In the office of Cebu Governor Gwendolen Garcia, many public utility vehicle drivers took a break.

The flow of traffic in Cebu City seems decreased to 60 to 70 percent instead most, said Irma Lungo of the Cebu City Traffic Operations Management (CITOM).

In Pacquiao's hometown in General Santos City, the streets were empty during the fight.

Inside Pacquiao's home, his mother Dionisia was jump

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April 26, 2007 1:00 - 3:00 PM (Thursday)	Atty. Sixto Brillantes (Election Law Practitioner)	Election Protest, Quo Warranto Proceedings in Election Cases, Election Offenses and Prohibited Acts during Election Period (2 hrs)
April 26, 2007 3:15 - 6:15 PM (Thursday)	Atty. Reynaldo B. Robles (Election Law Practitioner)	Updates & Recent Decisions in Election Laws & Cases (3 hrs)

Date/Time/Venue: April 26, 2007, Thursday, from 9:00 AM to 5:15 PM; Venue: Ballroom, Valle Verde Country Club (beside PSE Complex formerly CITEM); Capt. Henry Javier Street, Ba. Ugong, Pasig City

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SPORTS

Aces take easy route; B'men gain

STA. LUCIA corner Marko Aquino (left) and import Rock Wilson (right) get tangled up with Alaska's Mo Tiukinoi in this rebound play

GAMES WEDNESDAY (Araneta Coliseum)
6:30 p.m. — Sta. Lucia vs. Sta. Lucia
7:30 p.m. — Alaska vs. Sta. Lucia

By Manong R. Castillo

ALASKA PLAYED WELL ON ITS own last night. But Sta. Lucia did its share in making the Aces look really good.

Alaska made the toughest of shots while Sta. Lucia flubbed easy ones as the Aces broke the game wide open early and cruised to a 105-86 victory last night and regain a share of the PBA Fiesta Cup lead at the Araneta Coliseum.

Willie Miller helped jump-start the Alaska juggernaut with 11 points in the first period and most everyone chipped in their share from there as the Aces built leads of as many as 24 (x-x) for the second straight time and rise to 7-2.

Alaska cool idle defending champion Red Bull and Barangay Ginebra, but scotch Tim Cone won the job as coach the shoes for the frontrunner in the All-Star Game next week by beating out Bulls assistant Dee Rhemulla (x-x-x) quotes).

Joseph Cabagnot will handle the Reds, which will seek to bounce back from a 122-120 loss last year in Cagayan de Oro. This year's All-Star Game, which will feature the 3-Point duels, will be played in the University of Baguio gym.

Darrell Ellis, aside from playing great defense on reliever played well offensively on the other end, dusted Jessie Inocian with Miller with 21-10. He also had 11 rebounds, seven assists and two blocks.

"He's just such a weapon," Cone said of Ellis later. "It's his job to stop the best offensive player on the other end and he just contributes well offensively. It's just such a luxury to have a guy like that."

In the second game, Jun Magsi notched in second straw in the sun-

Sergio, surviving an endgame scare to 0-0) Mirasol, 96-94.

The Boosters upped their record to 2-7, just half a game behind the Dragons' 2-6 record.

More stories on A33 to 40

The Realtors, who were coming off a 100-100 victory over Coca-Cola, were back to their turnover-and-sluggish ways, never getting back in the fight after trailing by team-high-only-with-counting Kelly Williams playing the role of lone bright spot.

Sta. Lucia shot low for the fifth time in eight outings and the first in two games since dazzling young sweetwinner prospect Alex Cabagnot and 2006 MVP Kenneth Duremdes to the Tigers for Jaro Go Dolly Pinch.

"It was one of those games where things just went right for us and everything went wrong for them," Cone frankly said. "It's wrong to think that we are 35 points better than they (Realtors) are."

Sta. Lucia led in the early minutes, but the Aces soon looked threatened as all.

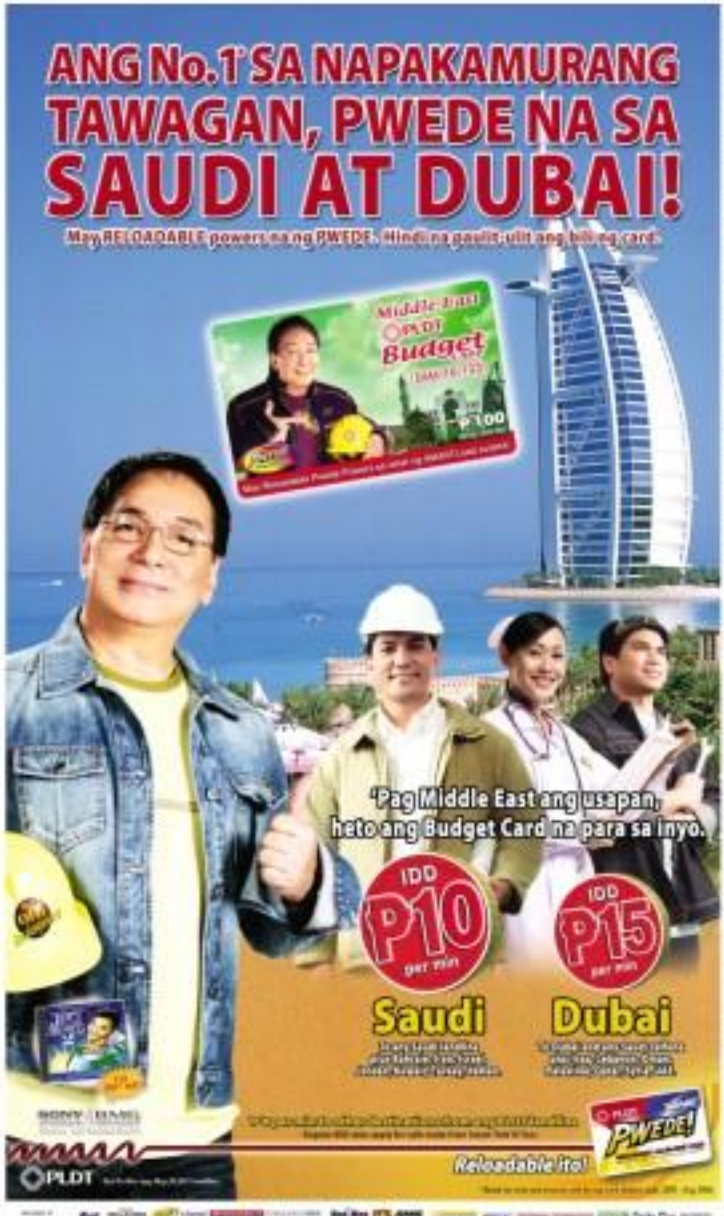
Allan Jose Mackie Aquino-jumpers and a Dennis Edwards-fumble that gave the Realtors a 33-31 lead with 7:46 left in the opening frame, the Aces knocked down to work as back-to-back jumpshots by Jeffrey Carrasco capped an 10-0 run that allowed Alaska ahead, 22-13.

Gregorio tipped as SBP executive director

MANDAUE Gregorio is expected to be named executive director of the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas anytime soon, sources said last night.

Gregorio, brother of Freedom coach Ryan, has reportedly been recommendation with SBP officials and is set to meet with the group in a president. PLDT top honcho Manny V. Pangilinan, at the PLDT offices today.

Manong R. Castillo



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PMA Class 2006 valedictorian has liver cancer

By Vincent Cabreza

AIR FORCE (BS) LT. ABEL TOLEdo, who graduated at the top of his class at the Philippine Military Academy last year, was the sort of cadet who often surprised his classmates.

Nobody knew for example, that he would become the valedictorian of PMA's Mandirigmang Siniguel ng Lahi (Matalahi) Class.

"Toledo was a quiet student but he never stood out that much. He was not at the very top of his class but neither was he near the bottom so we only realized that he was nursing pains to make him the top cadet during his second year," said Capt. Jobb Balanza, acting chief of the PMA department of air warfare when Toledo was still in the academy.

Later last month, Toledo again surprised officials at the PMA when they heard the news that he was suffering from liver cancer.

Since graduating from the academy, the young officer has been confined in several hospitals, most recently at the National Kidney and Transplant Institute in East Avenue, Quezon City. On Sunday, friends and classmates are hoping to raise P4 million for a procedure that could give him a new lease on life.

Ensign Andre Grapa, Toledo's classmate, said he and other classmates have been contributing part of their monthly pay for the hospitalexpenses of their "batash."

"But it is just not enough because we are all junior officers," he said.

Maj. Gen. Leopoldo Maligalig, PMA superintendent, said Toledo

2ND LT. Ayrel Toledo's classmates have rallied around him in his time of need.

obviously kept his medical condition to himself.

According to Balanza, Toledo was physically fit as a cadet and held his own during athletic competitions.

Maligalig said he and his predecessor, retired Lt. Gen. Cirilito Sobejana, only learned about Toledo's health problem after he graduated from the academy.

Grapa noted that Toledo was set to undergo further treating in the United States when doctors discovered he had cancer.

Capt. Dennis Soliveres, PMA public information officer, said the military sent Toledo to the Villamor Air Base hospital in the middle of last year.

"Like many cadets, he came from humble beginnings. He is known for being industrious and persistent. He always gave his best and is a bonus in handling"

TOLEDO, the class valedictorian, is congratulated by President Macapagal-Arroyo during the PMA graduation rites last year. INQUIRER FILE

Maligalig said.

Toledo, a native of San Dionisio, Iloilo but, is not the only PMA graduate to fall ill shortly after being commissioned into the service.

Muriel Uy, who was one of the first women officers produced by the academy suffered a major spinal injury right after she left PMA in 1997, she is still recuperating.

One of her classmates, Aileen Serrano, is seeking a disability discharge due to rheumatoid arthritis.

In one of the last messages he sends out regularly to friends, Toledo said he is suffering from cholangio carcinoma, a type of liver cancer which attacks the cells coursing the bile ducts.

This type of cancer is almost undetectable in its early stages, according to doctors.

Toledo did not make his illness public. He discussed his problem only with close family members, the classmates, on the other hand, only learned of his illness when he communicated with them through e-mail, said Grapa.

"He is sometimes interested in alternative medicine... But Abel always leaves the decision about alternative medicine to his doctors," Grapa said. "He is very careful. He doesn't want to use medicine that may interfere with his therapy."

According to the text messages he sent to his classmates, Toledo must undergo more self-therapy that will cost up to P2.7 million. He also needs to raise P1.2 million for six months of chemotherapy.

"He was confined in the middle of last year. The initial diagnosis was that he was suffering from hepatitis. Then doctors said he had kidney stones so they presumed his ailments to stem for stones, " Grapa said.

He added that members of the Matalahi class have thought that they would be able to cover Toledo's expenses because "we were the largest graduating class in PMA history."

But the ballooning costs have pressured too much for their meager salaries, he said, compelling them to turn to other people for help. Those who would like to make a donation or offer other forms of support for Toledo can contact Grapa at 0928-5005504.

Makati gov't looking for child-friendly barangay

By DJ Yap

THE CITY GOVERNMENT OF Makati is poised to honor the barangay that proves to be the best environment for children.

Local officials led by Mayor Jejomar Binay last week announced the launch of the first city-wide search for the "Child-Friendly Barangay" as the City Hall Quadrangle.

"We believe that the children are the roads and bridges to the future, and that the barangays have an important role in providing children with a healthy, safe and nurturing environment," Binay said.

Encourage support

The mayor, who also chairs the Local Council for the Protection of Children, said the project is part of the city's thrust to encourage barangay support in the promotion of child welfare.

The search aims "to better guarantee the safety and well-being of the children, thus enabling them to attain their fullest potential and become productive,

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PRIME PROPERTIES / SHARES FOR SALE

The **AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS)** invites interested parties to purchase by way of sealed bids the following properties / company shares of stocks / golf club shares on "cash", "as-is, where-is" basis:

Item No.	Description	Location	Minimum / Floor Price
01-I	1.5 million shares of stock of Montemviosa Dev't Corporation	150 hectare residential lot located in Sta. Melodia, Nasugbu, Batangas (near Evercrest Golf Club)	P862,500,000.00
01-II	Riviera Golf Club Shares 845 Class A Shares 834 Class B Shares 500 Class C Shares	Riviera Golf Club, Incorporated, Silang, Cavite (Two 18-Hole Championship Golf Courses)	P1,183,800,000.00 Lasting 45% controlling interest at Riviera Golf Club, Inc.)
01-II	1,577,007 sqm industrial lot	Batasang, Morong, Bataan (beside Ayala Land's Arnaiz Cove Project)	P618,000,828.00

The following properties will also be sold by way of sealed bids on cash or term basis (min. 30% down payment, 15% interest rate p.a., max. 5 yrs to pay):

03-A	House & Lot Lot: 230.4 sqm Flr. 330.48 sqm	1645 2nd Street, Fabie Estate, Paco, Manila	P3,591,215.00
03-B	House & Lot Lot: 329 sqm Flr. 167 sqm	B18, Lt 4, Rosario Bayanan Subd., Sucat, Muntinlupa	P2,466,540.00
03-B	House & Lot Lot: 168 sqm Flr. 66.25 sqm	B6, Lt 11, AFP Housing Village, San Mateo, Rizal	P602,810.00
03-F	281 sqm residential lot	B45 L26 Cen-Hil Subd., Dasmariñas, San Fernando, Pampanga	P321,955.00
01-B	480 sqm residential lot	4045 Concepcion, Bo. Rio-Chico, Gen. Trias, Cavite Edja	P220,071.00

For interested parties, please note the following activities that will be held at the Board Room, RSBS, 429 Capinpin Avenue, Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C.:

Pre-Bidding Conference	Deadline for Acceptance of Bids	Opening of Sealed Bids
April 25, 2007 10:00 a.m.	May 3, 2007 10:00 a.m.	May 3, 2007 10:15 a.m.

Bidding documents shall be available starting April 16, 2007 at the Property Management Office, 3/F, RSBS Bldg., Camp Aguinaldo, Q.C. at P500.00 each.

For inquiries on Item 01-I, please call Pulot or Arlan at 912-0996 911-4671 loc. 257.
For inquiries on Item 01-II, please call Yas or Tommy at 911-8713 / 913-4734 / 912-9220.
For inquiries on other items, please call Lou or Daniel at 913-4715 or 911-4671 loc. 240.

WASTED TAXPAYERS' MONEY
A reader from Muntinlupa City sent this text message to Metro Citizens' Call: "Over the past three weeks or so, workers have been reacting apart and restoring the cast sidewalk and gutter on the old national highway in Barangays Putatan and Bayanan. Hacking was wrong with the sidewalk and gutter that the workers destroyed. Many of us who live in Muntinlupa are wondering if the release of funds for the construction work could be related to fundraising drive of certain administration candidates in the city."

QC cops kill 2 rob suspects

By Margaux C. Ortiz

TWO SUSPECTED ROBBERS WERE killed in a shootout with policemen on Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City the other night.

The two men have yet to be identified, but five of them died on the spot while the other was declared dead on arrival at the East Avenue Medical Center, according to Insp. Roberto Baron of the QC Police District's criminal investigation and detection unit.

Before the incident, operatives of the CIDU led by Baron were conducting anti-criminality operations on Commonwealth Avenue at around 11:50 p.m. Saturday following rampant incidents of robbery in the area.

"These robberies are usually perpetrated by suspects who ride in tandem on motorcycles," Baron said in an interview.

According to him, he and his team then saw two men on board a motorcycle robbing complainant Benjamin Cruz, 61, in front of the Commonwealth Market.

When the law enforcers approached the suspects and introduced themselves as policemen, the two men ran away. But when they reached Commonwealth Plaza, the suspects fired on the policemen who were running after them, prompting them to fire back.

"We were able to recover two .38 caliber revolvers and a hand grenade from the suspects," Baron said.

The policemen also recovered a stolen cellphone, a wallet containing P1,000 and assorted identification cards.

The red motorcycle the suspects used has been taken to the QCPD headquarters for safekeeping. Names and the exact details are been withheld pa.

64-year-old woman killed in Payatas fire

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A SEXAGENARIAN DIED IN A fire that razed two houses in Payatas, Quezon City early yesterday morning.

Valeriana Sandoy, 64, of Phase IB Payatas B, had a hard time getting out of her house when the fire began at 2:30 a.m., according to SPO1 Rizalito Gallego of the Quezon City Fire Department.

The arson investigator said Sandoy, a native of Leyte, could not walk well because of a stroke.

Her neighbors said there was something wrong with her feet," Gallego said, adding that the victim died of suffocation and severe burns.

No one else was reported injured or killed in the incident.

Gallego said the fire only reached the first alarm. It lasted for 30 minutes before it was put out by two responding fire trucks.

"The fire may have been caused by an unattended candle or a kerosene lamp, a common cause of fires in depressed areas like this," he added.

Nightmare on Timog

DAYDLET ING noise in the nights more it our neighborhood bars on Timog Avenue corner Scout Tuazon, Quezon City. The noise pollution starts at 10 p.m. until 3 a.m. every days or week, coming from the bars in the area! I have made several complaints to the barangay captain and to the police precinct nearby, but with no results. Who do we have to call to put a stop to our nightmares? —Joel Paya, 40, Timog Avenue, Quezon City

Children at risk

I PASS by Oriental Quingol Extension and was shown children soliciting plastic gallons from passing trucks. Traffic is heavy in this area and children are at risk while doing it. Such a big risk is their food. Child welfare authorities, please take note. —Rancho Tinio, 43, Retiree, Quezon City

Clogged drainage

THE CANALS (sewer) at the intersection of Tindo and Sub Avenues near the Bacoor LRT station is clogged, emitting a foul smell in the area. Please help us. Pasay City officials. —James, 37, Pasay City

Leaking water pipe

ON C. M. RECTO (southbound) near Lakanda Street, there is a broken water pipe. —Nina S. Villanueva, 32, Quezon City

Confusing sign

ABOUT the E. Rodriguez exit of the LRT 1 (Line 1 Santolan) a young sign of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority. It reads, "Missing boarding a Manila Bay/Cubao/Fairview, it could kill you." But probably seeing the sign, you will not board the train. —Nelson Dominguez, 40, Sta. Mesa

Dangerous overpass

THE OVERPASS at the intersection of Tala Avenue and Monumento Highway in Caloocan is becoming a haven for night walkers and snatchers at night. They pose a danger to motorists and pedestrians by the area. The police station can be seen a bit. —Edric Jaurigue, Kabisa Classics, Sub-Agusinas, Manila

DID YOU KNOW

THE SMALLPOX vaccine was brought to the Philippines on April 13, 1803 by Dr. Francisco Xavier De Balmis, who was appointed by Spain's King Charles IV to lead a vaccination expedition to its colonies.

Balmis took 25 Mexican orphans on the two-month journey from Acapulco, Mexico to Manila. The children were used as reproductions of the vaccine as no plastic had yet to be conceptualized at the time. The smallpox vaccine was kept alive through arm-to-arm inoculation every 10 days.

In 1806, a smallpox institute and a vaccination board were established in Manila. The last serious smallpox epidemic in the country occurred in 1918. Finally, in 1980, the World Health Organization declared the world free of the deadly smallpox virus.

Ref.: Bookbetz Inquirer Research

Taytay aims to be Rizal's 2nd city after Antipolo

By Kristine L. Alave

THE TOWN OF TAYTAY IN RIZAL PROVINCE is preparing its bid to become the second city in the province, its mayor said yesterday.

Taytay Mayor Joric Gacula, who is running for a second term, said he and the other local officials have almost completed their plan to reclassify the town from a highly urbanized and lucrative into a city.

Taytay is classified as a first class municipality with a land area of 2,374 hectares and a population of nearly 300,000 people. The first city in Rizal province is Antipolo.

Gacula said that they have started working on the requirements for cityhood under the Local Government Code. He added that town officials have been studying the population and the annual local revenue set by the law.

According to him, he is confident that Taytay will meet the requirements as the town has shown tremendous progress in the last few years, getting investment spillovers from Metro Manila.

Data provided by the local government showed that at least 38 publicly listed investments have infused capital in the locality since 2000.

Among the new investments in the town is SM Prime Investments Inc. which is building its 25th shopping mall on the Manila East Road. Puregold Shopping Mondo is also constructing an outlet near the proposed government center in Barangay San Juan.

Gacula also noted that two call centers, an international recreational facility, a hotel and convenience shops are allowed to start operating in the town.

QC gov't to mark Earth Day with kite festival, workshop

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A HOSTS OF ACTIVITIES WILL BE HELD BY Quezon City to observe next Saturday's Earth Day.

Kickoff of the week-long celebration, Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. will lead the pledges of appreciation today to the city's partners to solid waste management and environmental protection.

"This is to acknowledge the support of various groups and nongovernmental organizations for the solid waste management program of Quezon City," according to Fredinilla Bonday, head of the city's environmental protection and waste management department.

Bonday said this year's activity includes barangays in the city that comply with the minimum standards set by the Laguna Lake Development Authority and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

She added that the program would be highlighted by an activity called, "Saranggola Festival sa Lungsod Quezon," which aims to promote interest in recovery in the form of waste generation and recycling.

The event will be held at the Quezon Hall parking area next June 2.

"Small to medium recyclers will be tapped such as members of the Environment Multipurpose Cooperative Zobel Limited," Bonday said.

Sitio Bukas will serve as an incentive for junk shops that support the city's solid waste management, especially its waste diversion and environmental compliance goals.

Other activities scheduled for the week include a kite flying festival and workshop at the Quezon Memorial Circle on April 28.

Belmonte said the theme of the festival and workshop, scheduled from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m., would be "Fly High QC Environment and Clean Air."

The mayor added that about 50 students from city schools would participate in the special event.

The celebration will culminate with smoke testing and the apprehension of smoke belching motor vehicles near Quezon City Hall from April 29 to 22.

"This is in support of the Bagong Barangay Workshop 2007—A Call for Clean Air and Good Health project organized by the DENR and the Lung Center of the Philippines," Belmonte said.

Makati gov't . . .

From page A12

self-reliant citizens," Binay said in a statement.

Spearheaded by the Makati LCPC, it has the following objectives:

- strengthen participation of the barangays in the city government's activities and projects;
- promote child-friendliness and awareness of children's rights in every barangay;
- recognition of barangays that excel in child development programs; and
- encourage, support, and emulate programs and services implemented for children.

Cash prizes at stake

Marjorie de Veyra, chief of the Makati Social Welfare Department and head of the LCPC secretariat, said the top three winners shall receive, in order, P50,000, P20,000 and P10,000 in cash, as well as plaques.

The top winner shall also receive a trophy declaring the barangay as the "Most Child-Friendly Barangay of Makati."

Criteria

De Veyra said the criteria are the functionality of the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children, policy formulation of BCPC and advocacy measures to address children issues and concerns, and implementation of child-friendly programs and projects.

The deadline for submission of contest requirements is June 23.

Winners will be announced and prizes awarded on the first week of October in line with the month-long celebration of Children's Month.

BRITE COMMUNITIES PROJECT: Changing the lives of the Underprivileged

For the past ten years, Information Technology Education has played a vital role in the society.

But no matter how modern and fast- paced the evolution of the highly- acclaimed digital age, there are still untouched spots which Information Technology Education has failed to reconnect to.

It is discouraging to think that private and dumb have accumulated foundations that would share progressive roots in the evolution of the computer generation.

Melencio Espiritu is one of the unfortunate ones whose life was struck down to earth by poverty. He reason why his family cannot afford to send him to school for further learning. For him the world is too big but he couldn't take steps to meet his journey. Education is the best weapon one can use to survive, but how could he have one when his cannot afford it? The price of education is so valuable, but the price of education dwell is high.

This prompted Rotary Club of Valenzuela, one of the leading NGO's in the Philippines to in cooperation with Informatics Computer Institute Valenzuela to launch the BRITE Communities project (bringing IT education to the communities), a solution to heighten the literacy of the people and youngsters like Melencio which offers free computer courses in Valenzuela City for the coming years.

BOOT RE-STATUS BRITE. At the launching of BRITE are Rotarians under Dr. Otto Agana (President) Rotarian Ali Jimenez (PRO Rtn) Erna Dy, Ate Anna Paragsa, Information Technology Managing Director Rosanna Ego-O, IBC Valenzuela President Arvy Lim and Rtn Chris Chua.

Seeing poverty as one of the few reasons why Information Technology Education has failed to make its continuous to reform sectors of society, the BRITE Communities Project aims to provide IT knowledge to underprivileged but deserving individuals and grant an alternative for deserving out-of-school youth by enhancing their personal growth and self-esteem through electronical knowledge of modern day Information Technology.

Hi-spring Classes

Working hand in hand, Informatics Computer Institute Valenzuela will provide a space grant for 6 working students or computer set-ups, exclusively for the Rotary Clubs use and aptly named it the IC Valenzuela IT Training Center. Informatics will also provide free computer lessons 4-6 hrs. a day from Monday- Saturday. The 6 week course package will include Basic Computer, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Powerpoint and Internet Surfing as part of the curriculum.

Students who will successfully finish the 30 hour course will get a certificate which will be issued by the accredited company Informatics Computer Institute.

This long term project aims to help accelerate progress and development in Valenzuela. Initially the program will offer basic computer literacy courses to qualified individuals. In time, more advanced courses will be offered in order to specific student interests.

The BRITE Communities project is another big leap for Information Technology Education as it converts the untouched spots of the computer generation. It is likewise the start of the transformation for a digital age person. **To reach every aspect of the world with technology.**

Informatics Computer Institute Valenzuela delivers top quality IT education to people from all walks of life. It currently offers affordable computer rental rates for drop-in student as well short courses for the aspiring professionals. For more information please contact (02) Informatics at 291 2222, 440-4177 or visit the website at http://www.ici-valenzuela.com.

BRITE- Graduation

METRO-BRIEFS

Body found

A 60-YEAR-OLD teacher of the Chiang Kai-Shek College in Tondo, Manila was found dead in her house in Bicutan on Saturday evening. Police identified the victim as Ana Gil Galan of Nos. 808 Pinkamote Bldg. at 1181 Zobel Street, Bicutan. Chief Investigator Jonathan Bautista said in his report that Galan's body was discovered by the building's security guard, Rolando Bautista, at 8:45 p.m. The victim was last seen alive at around 7 p.m. when she asked a helper to buy her dinner. The helper, who is on hand with Galan's meal, asked for the guard's assistance when the victim did not answer. Ed Kinosio on the case.

Allan M. Lopez

Binondo fire

A SCARE IT was given a residential building in Binondo, Manila yesterday afternoon. Bureau investigator on call Ben Ibarra said the blaze started at 5:20 p.m. on the third floor of a three-story building owned by La Fortuna Inc. located at corner San Nicolas Streets. The fire reached the third floor, razing the unit occupied by the Ramirez family. It was put out at 6:07 p.m. No casualties were reported.

Noel Godoy

AS LOYOLA CELEBRATES ANOTHER BANNER YEAR, WE ARE RELEASING OUR EDUCATION PLAN BENEFITS 2 MONTHS AHEAD OF SCHDULE EFFECTIVE APRIL 17, 2007

Amway Celebrates 10 Years Of Helping Filipinos Live Better Lives

MESSAGE

Warmest greetings to the men and women of **Amway Philippines** as you celebrate your 10th anniversary.

I laud Amway Philippines for your commitment and dedication to provide better lives to more Filipinos. The entrepreneurial opportunity offered by Amway has created livelihood for thousands of Filipinos all over the country who aspire to have a business of their own.

Over the past ten years, Amway Philippines has contributed to the growth of the Philippine economy, as shown by the growing numbers of small and independent businessmen in the country participating in the direct selling industry.

Our national agenda is designed to make our country toward greater political stability, economic prosperity, and peace and order. Our focus now is to bring the benefits of a strong economy to every Filipino even as we put in place massive infrastructures to attract more investments, create more jobs, and beat poverty.

As what partners of government, I ask you to join me in our effort to achieve a seven to eight percent growth rate in the next three years.

Warmest regards,

Gloria Macapagal Arroyo

HER EXCELLENCY GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
President, Republic of the Philippines

MESSAGE

Our warmest greetings to the management and staff of Amway Philippines as you celebrate your **10th Anniversary** this month.

We commend the company for its contributions to the creation of employment opportunities in the country and for the promotion of entrepreneurship that has enabled thousands of independent businesses to thrive in the direct selling business.

Despite all the challenges posed by the industry, we are pleased that **Amway** has remained confident in the potential of the Philippine market to allow its business to grow and succeed. The high level of confidence that occasion such as **Amway** has placed in the Philippine investment climate will always remain as government's driving force in its continuing efforts to refine and streamline the business environment to make it even more conducive for the growth, progress and prosperity.

On its **10th Anniversary**, we wish **Amway** greater success in pursuing its firm commitment to offer a chance for a better life to many Filipinos.

Congratulations and more power to **Amway Philippines**.

Sincerely,

HONORABLE PETER FAVILA
Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry

MESSAGE

On behalf of the association, congratulations, Amway Philippines, for your ten successful years!

The association has been instrumental in protecting and promoting the integrity of the direct selling industry because of your unwavering support plus hard-pressed over your ten-year membership. You did this by strongly embracing the tenets of a legitimate multi-level marketing company. It has shown high regard for the welfare of its employees, independent Business Owners (IBOs) and the environment where you operate.

The commitment and enthusiasm that Amway Philippines showed in the past ten years has been significant in creating more awareness about the endless opportunities present in the industry, promoting entrepreneurship among Filipinos, and enhancing the image of direct selling.

Thank you for your great contribution to the association and to the industry.

Sincerely,

JESSICA HAWLEY
Chairman, Direct Selling Association of the Philippines

Amway Philippines, a global direct selling company providing the Amway business opportunity to Filipinos, is celebrating its 10th anniversary in the Philippines this April.

Established in 1997 with just 11 products, Amway Philippines has evolved into a premier multi-level marketing company, and today offers over 70 products known for their global reputation based on world-class research and development including nutritional supplements, skin care and cosmetics, personal care, home care and agricultural products.

Amway's entry in the Philippines in 1997 launched the growth of the country's direct selling industry. The influx of the business attracted many Filipinos and Amway Philippines became one of Amway's fastest growing affiliates in the world.

"In the ten years Amway has been operational in the country, we have come a long way towards fulfilling our founders' fundamentals of freedom, family, hope and reward. This is evident in the thousands of successful Amway Independent Business Owners (IBOs) in the country," said Commander Bonnyco Country Manager, Amway Philippines.

However, it was not always a smooth-sailing business for Amway. Over the past ten years, several challenges came its way which sidetrack or affected the Amway business. Shortly after Amway opened in the Philippines, the Asian financial crisis hit the region, causing a slowdown in businesses. Moreover, pyramiding scams has since become which created a stigma to the direct selling industry.

To address these challenges, Amway embarked on a campaign with the National Consumer Affairs Council of the Department of Trade and Industry and the Direct Selling Association of the Philippines to educate the public regarding pyramiding scams. As part of the campaign, Amway sponsored seminars and exhibits, arranged interviews with print, TV and radio media and produced brochures on pyramiding scams. Through these initiatives, Amway has successfully established itself as one of the legitimate multi-level marketing companies in the Philippines.

Offering High Quality Products

Amway never wavered on its commitment to stay in the Philippines and provide hope for Filipinos that aspire for better lives. More positive is an more available to its customers including Artistry, one of the world's top five prestige cosmetic brands, in 1998 and Nutrilite, the world's leading brand of vitamins, minerals and dietary supplements, in 1999.

The Philippines being an agricultural country, Amway also introduced agricultural products such as Nutrigard-Xtra, Nutriplant 3D and MPSA-80, thus helping Filipino farmers increase their harvest. The introduction of environment friendly agricultural products has boosted Amway's sales to the Visayas and Mindanao region where there is a big demand for such organically compliant products.

"The Philippines is just one of the very few Amway affiliates that offer organically compliant agriculture products. These agricultural products are well accepted by Filipino farmers, especially in the Mindanao region where we are experiencing the strongest growth outside of Metro Manila."

For faster and easier distribution of its products, Amway Distributor Centers (ADCs) were established all over the country. To date, seven ADCs are operational. The first of these was located along EDSA in Quezon City which was later transferred as a more strategically located venue at the EDSA Central Pavilion in Mandaluyong. The Amway office in Makati also houses an ADC. Aside from those in Metro Manila, ADCs were also established in the provinces such as in Cagayan De Oro, which has become the country's biggest ADC outside Metro Manila. ADCs were also established in Cebu, Davao, Tuguegarao and Marikina South Cotabato. In Metro Manila, Amway products are even made more easily available with Amway's Express Home Delivery Service.

Helping Filipinos Become their Own Bosses

Behind all the success that Amway is enjoying today is the commitment and dedication of its over 80,000 highly motivated Independent Business Owners (IBOs). True to this, the IBO couples become Diamond distributors in 2000, the highest status reached by IBOs in the Philippines so far. Successful IBOs not only earn more income from their hard work, Amway IBOs also get to enjoy several perks such as all-expense paid trips to top tourist destinations in the Philippines and abroad. Amway is not just regarded as a seven-to-ten level marketing company, it is also known among IBOs for its caring-sharing high regard for the value of freedom, family, hope and reward.

"We are very pleased to see IBOs in the Philippines, more than just selling products, through the Amway business opportunity, we have enabled them to make a difference to the lives of other people as well," said Bonnyco.

Enriching Lives

Moreover, Amway is not all business. At the same time that it was growing the business, Amway showed it was a caring and responsible corporate citizen through several advocacy campaigns. These include the Amway Cares program which was focused on caring for the environment. As part of the campaign, Amway donated tree seedlings and took up river banks in different schools in Metro Manila, in celebration of the centennial of the first Philippine Republic in 1998. Amway employees and IBOs also participated in the cleaning of canals/creeks including Aguinaldo Shrine in Cavite, the Bandurian Church in Malabon and the Quezon Memorial Shrine in Quezon City using EDC, an Amway cleaning product.

Aside from that, Amway Philippines is also implementing the Caring Eyes Campaign for Children, a global initiative to uplift the lives of children all over the world.

"We make it a part of our role at Amway Philippines to contribute to the community where we operate. We

AMWAY THROUGH THE YEARS

1996: Former Amway President Dax Amlag visited the Philippines with a capital call at Aun Philippine Peninsula Hotel in Makati via Manila Bay Area.

1997: Amway Philippines held its first off-site at the Mini Sports Complex in Tagaytay with more than 4,000 excited Ventage and Diamond Independent Business Owners (IBOs).

With 11 product offerings, Amway's launch in the Philippines created a record for the most number of IBO registrations among all the Amway affiliates in the world.

1998: Amway Philippines launched its Artistry product line, one of the world's top five largest selling prestige brands of facial skin care and colour cosmetics, for more than 5 years (based on Euromonitor study of global 1998-1999 retail sale and Euromonitor study of global 1997-2000 retail sale).

Amway produced Return of Scented Edition brochure in partnership with the National Consumer Affairs Council of the Department of Trade and Industry in the campaign against bogus pyramid schemes.

1999: Amway Philippines launched OPSA-80, a mineral offering under its agricultural line.

2000: Amway Philippines celebrated its 3rd month's selling record of shipping, Nutrilite and Artistry Supplements in celebration of its 3rd anniversary. Also launched Nutri-Vita.

2001: As a reward for its outstanding IBOs who have excelled in the Amway business, the company held the first ever out-of-the-country Diamond Leadership Summit off in Queensland, Asia. The Amway Leadership Summit is an annual event in which Amway Philippines recognizes and rewards IBOs who have exhibited an outstanding sales performance for the previous fiscal year.

2002: Launched its 2 nutrition retail unit, in an exclusive mall in Subang, Australia.

2003: Amway and Amwaymag IBOs helped countless displaced Iraqi IDPs (IDPs) in Erbil, Kurdistan.

Amway launched new mall for a nutrition retail in Australia on its 6th anniversary.

1996

1997

ARTISTRY
1998

1999

2004: Top performing IBOs were awarded with a trip to Gold Coast, Australia for the annual IBO.

On its 5th Anniversary, Amway launched the Give By One Campaign for Children. The company invited 50 children from the Bahay ni Kaposo Settlement House as an afternoon of fun at Enchanted Kingdom.

Amway Sun Summer was launched with a 3-kilometer fun run at the CCP Complex Roxas Boulevard.

asset to be able to do our share in enriching the lives of people," Benson said.

Moving forward

Now, on its 10th year in the Philippines, Amway is enjoying a good momentum in the growth of its business. In 2006 alone, Amway experienced a 18% growth in terms of sales, an indication of a better, more successful Amway Philippines.

"The past 10 years were not all roses for Amway Philippines. Nevertheless, we remain committed to our mission in helping Filipinos live better lives. Over this time span, we are proud of all that we've accomplished and we're more than excited and optimistic about what the future brings. Together with our distributor/owners and subsidiary IBOs, we at Amway Philippines are determined more than ever to continue to be proactive in providing high-quality business opportunities to more Filipinos.

With continued trust and support from our customers, industry partners, employees and IBOs, we look forward to more decades of helping Filipinos live better lives," Bonoyo added.

Amway Distributor Centers

MESSAGE

Congratulations, Amway Philippines, on your 10th anniversary!

There are a lot of reasons to celebrate this wonderful milestone.

Since 1997, Amway Philippines has been one of the fastest growing Amway affiliates in the world. With more than 40,000 independent business owners in the Philippines, we provide people from all walks of life with the opportunity to run their own business.

But Amway is not just about helping people start their own business, we're about helping people live better lives. You're not alone when you join an Amway business. You have a network of people who want you to succeed, as well as company tools in the corporate office.

One of the reasons Amway Philippines has risen so successful is that the Filipino people really care. Just ask[illegible] care about helping their fellow Filipinos grow their businesses and build our employees and IBOs care about their communities and giving back.

Amway Philippines has committed itself to a long-term process of promoting literacy and children's rights through many means today. True to its mission of enriching the lives of Filipino children, Amway Philippines[illegible] a public school in Makati where Amway IBOs and employees regularly visit to mentor.

In the Philippines, Amway never ceased to fulfill the purpose of better lives to Filipinos. Amway Philippines has experienced the ups and downs of the direct selling business. The soul of the people, dedicated and hard work, embodied by its management and staff and IBOs, Amway Philippines has continued to advance in the delivery of it products and providing the opportunities to Filipinos.

Congratulations once again, Amway Philippines, on reaching your 10th anniversary!

VERNAN AGUIG
Chairman, Amway

DONG YOON
President, Amway

MESSAGE

"The celebration of truly a remarkable achievement and a major milestone for us in Amway. Throughout the years, Amway Philippines has successfully created distinct niche[illegible] Asia's rising tiger economy. Today, we're not only a celebration for the Philippines is a testimony of Amway's success in the Asia Pacific region and to all Amway members in Amway's global success.

"The business opportunities offered by Amway is world-class, an opportunity that has a strong foundation with a solid leader in youth, dual marketing in Amway, we can look forward to providing opportunity, available and can have more. I speak the dream of opportunity in any country where we have launched.

"We have always believed in the fundamental belief in every opportunity – continuing delivery of freedom and quality lives for family, offering the well-deserved rewards for hard work and commitment, and providing an opportunity to make every hope for a better and more meaningful life a reality.

"As a part of Amway Philippines really thanks a lot to us – believe that this is indication of a more successful[illegible] Amway is the Philippines and in the years and opportunities to offer to Filipinos who have this passion to succeed in their own business and who believe in the promise of Amway.

My sincere congratulations to the management and staff and to the thousands of independent[illegible] Amway Philippines!

MARTIN AGIS
Managing Director, Amway Taiwan and Philippines

MESSAGE

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of Amway Philippines, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed to its achievement the past. Indeed, this is a momentous celebration for the Company.

In the last years Amway has been operational in the country, it has come a long way, successfully[illegible] the areas of its business. The last few years of Amway in the Philippines were not easy. The business was faced with challenges such as the decrease in the purchasing power of consumers, internet which created a stigma in the direct selling industry. Despite all these, Amway has remained committed to creating business opportunities for Filipinos. We supported our business partners in our sales force[illegible] Amway has been awarded 40,000 independent business owners (IBO) and have set up seven Distribution Centers all over the country. In the last years alone, Amway posted a growth of 18 %, a testament that the business continues to grow in the country. Moreover, the IBO couples even turned as Diamond Distributors, the highest rank in achieving Amway IBO in the Philippines so far. And we are expecting more achievers in the next few years.

Starting with just 15 products, Amway now offers over 70 products derived by scientific research and development including nutritional supplements, skin care and cosmetics, personal care, home care and agricultural products. In the Philippines, Amway is the only direct selling company that offers organically produced agricultural products, thereby helping thousands of farmers in the Visayas and Mindanao, where this service[illegible] has been well received, to nurture their crops with environment conscious products. Whatever[illegible] Amway accounts for about 50% of Amway Philippines' network, the strongest growth experienced by Amway outside of Metro Manila.

Just together with more than 40,000 strong Amway IBOs, we at Amway Philippines remain committed to the thrust of the Amway business and we understand more than ever to continue to be proactive in providing high-quality business opportunities to more Filipinos. We are proud of all that we've accomplished over the last 10 years, but we're even more excited and optimistic about what the future brings. With continued trust and support from our customers, industry partners, employees and IBOs, we look forward to another decade of helping Filipinos live better lives!

OSWALDO ROSQUIN
Country Manager, Amway Philippines

One by One Campaign for Children

AMWAY'S CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Amway is about helping people live better lives, and even better is this more important than with supporting our children.

The One by One Campaign for Children is Amway's global initiative to uplift the lives of children around the world.

The One by One program has activities in more than forty markets, combating child poverty in Africa, providing crucial care for children fighting cancer in rural Mexico and Brazil, and creating realistic activities for disabled children in Japan.

In the Philippines

In the Philippines, Amway launched the One by One Campaign for Children in 2004 where 50 children from the Domus de Filipinas Settlement Home were treated to an afternoon of fun and rides at the Enchanted Kingdom.

In 2005, Amway Philippines committed itself to a long-term advocacy of promoting children's rights and literacy through story-telling. True to its mission of enriching the lives of Filipino children, Amway Philippines put up a story telling corner at P. Benitez Elementary School in Makati where Amway donated story books. The corner became a venue of regular story-telling sessions started by Amway IBOs and employees and now being continued by parents of grade school students.

This year, Amway Philippines aims to expand the One by One Campaign for Children in other key cities where Amway operates such as Cagayan de Oro City.

2000

2001

Amway Philippines forged a partnership with Micas Pandesal, Inc. for its One by One Campaign for Children which focused on promoting literacy and advancing children's rights through story-telling sessions with Amway employees and IBOs.

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2007: Amway Philippines celebrates its 10th year in the country.

ABOUT ALTICOR

Alticor (alticor.com) is the parent company of Amway Corp., Quixtar Inc. and Access Business Group LLC. Headquartered in Ada, Michigan, USA, Alticor and its affiliates offer products, business opportunities, and manufacturing and logistics services to more than 80 countries and territories worldwide.

ABOUT AMWAY PHILIPPINES

Amway is one of the world's direct selling companies in the world with a local affiliate providing the Amway opportunity to thousands of Filipinos since 1997. Beginning with just 11 products, Amway now has over 70 offerings, including nutritional supplements, skin care and cosmetics, personal care, home care, and agricultural products. This year, on its 10th anniversary in the Philippines, Amway reaffirms its commitment to help Filipinos live better lives. For more information, please call the Amway Philippines hotline at (02) 814-8181 or visit www.amway.com.ph.

With eye on Iran, Arab states seek nuke power

TWO YEARS AGO, THE LEADers of Saudi Arabia told American officials that they were considering building nuclear reactors to produce electricity, but they had no intention of developing the technology to enrich uranium or reprocess spent fuel, which can be used to make nuclear weapons.

Today, they are scrambling to buy atomic reactors, buy nuclear hardware and build support for a regional system of uranium enrichment.

Turkey is preparing for its first atomic plant. Egypt has announced plans to build one. Roughly a dozen states in the region have recently turned to the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna for help in learning how to use nuclear power.

While interest in nuclear energy is rising globally, it is unusually strong in the Middle East.

"The rules have changed," King Abdullah II of Jordan recently told the Israeli newspaper Haaretz. "Everybody's going for nuclear programs."

The Middle Eastern states say they only want nuclear power for peaceful purposes. But U.S. officials think the real motivation is also intended to counter the threat of a nuclear Iran.

"One danger of Iran going nuclear has always been that it might provoke others," said Mark Fitzpatrick, a senior fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, an arms analysis group in London. "So when you see the development of nuclear power elsewhere in the region, it's curious for some reasons."

Officials from 11 governments to and around the Middle East warned at an Arab summit meeting in March that Iran's drive for atomic technology could result in the beginning of "a grave and destructive nuclear arms race in the region."

US officials are missing no such developments in Saudi Arabia's rush for mapping up power on Iran. President Bush has talked privately to experts on the Middle East about his fears of a "Sunni bomb," and his concerns that countries in the Middle East may turn to the only nuclear armed Sunni state, Pakistan, for help.

Geoffrey Kemp, a Middle East expert in the Nixon Center, a Washington policy institute, said: "Here's the time to worry," said Geoffrey Kemp. "The transition here is scary, too. The idea that they'll emerge as the regional hegemon is silly. There will be a very serious counteraction, certainly in conventional military buildups but also in examining the nuclear option." AFP

For some Hispanics, coming to US means junking religion

RICHMOND, Va.—ON SUNDAY afternoons, when the local Catholic church holds Mass for Spanish-speaking Catholics, Edgar Chillo is playing soccer in a league with busloads of Hispanic players.

As a child in Guatemala, Chillo attended Mass every Sunday. But after immigrating to America 23 years ago, he and his family left the churchgoing habit. "We just no feel when we feel the need to," he said. "But when we were born in America we don't feel the need."

New research shows that increasing percentages of Hispanics are abandoning church, suggesting to researchers that, along with assimilation comes a measure of secularization.

Several studies show that Hispanics are just as likely as other Americans to identify themselves as having "no religion," and to turn offthem with a church. Those who describe themselves as secular now a small community among Hispanics—as they are among Americans at large. But, in contrast to many of the non-Hispanic Americans who identify themselves as secular, most of the Hispanics say they were once religious.

The National Catholic Church, the religious home of most Hispanics, is experiencing the greatest exodus. While many former Catholics join evangelical or Pentecostal churches, the recent research shows that many of them leave church altogether. New York Times/News Service

HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL
Part of a sculpture at the Holocaust Memorial Wall in Miami Beach, Fla., is shown April 15. The name of American journalist Daniel Pearl, who was killed in terrorists in 2002, will be among the millions remembered during a Holocaust memorial ceremony on Sunday during Yom HaShoah—the annual time of remembrance. It will be the first time Jews-Holocaust victims has been remembered there. AP

US gives North Korea more time

BEIJING—THE UNITED STATES is willing to give North Korea a few more days to meet its commitments after Pyongyang appeared to miss a deadline on Sunday to shut down a nuclear reactor, a senior US official said.

Under a Feb. 13 multinational deal, Pyongyang agreed to shut down its Soviet-era Yongbyon plant within 60 days but it seems it has not made good on that pledge because of millions of dollars frozen in North Korean accounts at a Macau bank.

North Korea has insisted the money be freed before it will comply with the agreement but the United States has said the funds have been withdrawn and should no longer be an issue.

"Our position is not inflexible ... but we feel that given that the kind of unexpected complexities that did arise in connection with some of the banking issues that it's probably prudent to give this thing a few more days," a senior US official who asked not to be identified told reporters.

North Korea said on Friday it would soon check whether it could access about $25 million in the accounts at Macau's Banco Delta Asia, which were frozen after the United States said it suspected the bank of being involved in money laundering. Reuters

12 civilians die in US Marines' rampage

BASRA, AFGHANISTAN—US MARINES reacted to a bomb ambush in eastern Afghanistan last month with execution force, killing groups of by members and vehicles with machine gun fire in a rampage that covered 16 miles of highway and left 12 civilians dead, including an infant and three elderly men, according to a report published by an Afghan human rights commission on Saturday.

Families of the victims said last week that they had demanded justice from the US military and the Afghan government, and they described the aftermath of the March shooting. In Sangachar province, the 10-year-old girl was cut down while she was carrying a bundle of grass to her family's farmhouse. A 15-year-old man walking to his shop near his home was torn to pieces by the same bullets that hit his sister. Did not investigate the body when he came to the scene.

In its report, the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission condemned the suicide bomb attack that initially struck a convoy of a Marine Special Operations unit on March 6, wounding one American, and said there may also have been small-arms fire directed at the convoy immediately after the blast. But it said the response was disproportionate, especially given the obviously non-military character of the Marines' targets long after the ambush.

"In failing to distinguish between civilian and legitimate military targets, the US Marine Corps, Special Forces employed indiscriminate force," the report said. "This action thus constitutes a serious violation of international humanitarian standards."

The bombing and subsequent shooting was the most high-profile of a number of human rights violations in the fighting in Afghanistan that were documented by the human rights commission. The report comes amid mounting "killing, violence and condition reprisals that are setting resistance among members of civilians," Jews and that have brought harsh criticism of the government and involvement at home. New York Times/News Service

GANITO KALAKI ANG BANTA NG BIRD FLU

Wala pang bird flu sa Pilipinas, pero kelangan pa ring mag-ingat.
Ugaliing maghugas ng kamay at huwag basta-bastang hahawak
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Maghanda at matuto. Pumunta sa **www.iwasbirdflu.com**

All sectors unite to fight bird flu

In a country that seems divided over every issue, it's refreshing to see how the threat of bird flu has brought varied sectors together.

Kuyog Pipiol", running to efforts towards children — a regional. Asunción be very susceptible to bird flu, based on the experiences of affected countries.

On the other hand, the PPS has introduced a training program for journalists. Given the technical nature of bird flu and of pandemics, deep knowledge and understanding will be needed to accurately report on developments.

LIFE's have pledged financial and logistical support. Local officials and veterinary authorities have eagerly attended listening sessions, especially navigation where migratory birds are seasonally plentiful or where there are large broiler, layer, and duck populations. They must avoid unclear local or provincial ordinances's to unilateral activities, and prepare for any future incidences of bird flu outbreaks/casualties.

(Materials and other information on avoidance of www.iwasbirdflu.com)

President IBKA hereof has pledged to release funds to implement measures preventing the entry of bird flu, as well as to prepare the measures necessary to cope with a possible outbreak.

Another point of unity — hastened by the bird flu threat — extends beyond our shores. Countries consistently reviewing its trade and foreign policy have been sharing intelligence, resources, and information to further combat bird flu. President GMA is personally working to Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to strengthening the Indonesian health system. A team of our highly trained government scientists and was focused and dispatched immediately. In a recent ASEAN Summit, one of the key decisions was to organize a united stand against bird flu.

The beauty of this whole effort is we have we didn't have to create new crises to realize the need to come together. Whatever disputes have been set aside, and it's time to take on the difference.

The Philippines is one of the last bird flu-free countries in Asia, and is hanging by a thread. But with the various sectors, and economies, all pulling together and holding out, it just might not break.

IWAS BIRD FLU

Signs of Bird Flu in Birds

- Sudden death without clinical signs
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- Soft shelled or misshapen eggs
- Swelling of the head, eyelids, comb, wattles and hocks
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- Coughing, sneezing
- Incoordination
- Diarrhea

Tips on how to protect yourself from Bird Flu

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- **Protect the children.**
- **Protect yourself and your workers.**
- **Protect your neighbors.**

Call the Bird Flu Hotline:
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unicef

The WORLD

Lira Lorena B. Suero

WB meet may spell end for Wolfowitz

WASHINGTON—EMBATTLED WORLD BANK PRESIDENT PAUL Wolfowitz, under fire for his role in the promotion of his girlfriend, was to join a policy meeting Sunday in what could be one of his last official acts as bank chief.

Facing calls for his resignation, Wolfowitz was also scheduled to appear at a press conference following the weekly session of the bank's policy-setting Development Committee, representing the lender's 185 members.

After a tempestuous two-year tenure at the Washington-based development body, Wolfowitz is now under siege from bank staffers and advocacy groups who want him to go.

He stands accused of helping arrange a hefty pay hike for his partner, former World Bank communications specialist Shaha Riza, when she was transferred to the US State Department in 2005.

Wolfowitz, a former US defense department deputy and architect of the Iraq war, has admitted to—and apologized for—mistakes in the procedure under which the pay package was approved.

He has said he will abide by a decision on his fate that is to be taken by the bank's 24-member executive board.

British development minister Hilary Benn said Saturday that the guy sounded had done "damage" to the bank and should now have resigned.

"While this whole business has damaged the bank and should not have happened, we should respect the board process," he said in a statement as he prepared to take part in weekend talks at both the bank and the International Monetary Fund.

"The weekend ought to be about the bank's contribution to fighting poverty and I am looking forward to discussing how we can increase aid, tackle climate change, and get clean water to the one billion human beings who don't have any," Benn said. AFP

RIOT police officers detain Russian opposition leader Garry Kasparov, center, the former world chess champion, during a protest in Moscow on April 14. —

Anti-Kremlim protest quashed; opposition's Kasparov arrested

MOSCOW—RUSSIAN POLICE DETAINED several hundred people, including chess champion Garry Kasparov, on Saturday as they stifled not an attempt by opponents of President Vladimir Putin to protest near the Kremlin.

Activists had planned to gather at a city center square, defying a law that prohibits rallies that are not sanctioned after they say is Putin's trampling of democratic freedoms and demand a fair vote to choose a new president in 2008.

Traitor of the police, acting on a ruling from the city authorities banning the protest, pounced on protesters as they appeared in small groups near the square and swiftly loaded them into buses, Reuters witnesses said.

Kasparov, a leader of the Other Russia opposition coalition that organized the protest, was taken to court in central Moscow and charged with public order offenses. He was fined 1,000 rubles ($39) and released after 10 hours detention.

"Today the regime showed its true colors, its true face" said 44-year-old Kasparov, a world chess champion for over a decade. "I believe that was a great victory for the opposition because people got through and the march happened," he said.

Commenting on the police breaking up the rally, he said:

"This is a different level. The Russian state has shown it no longer respects the world press, public opinion or even Russian law." He said: "Russia is a country somewhere between Belarus and Zimbabwe." Lines of riot police had earlier linked arms and forced protesters off the streets into Moscow's subway system.

Groups of protesters, hosting Russian flags and roses and shouting "Russia without Putin," were dispersed as they tried to make their way to the city square. Police detained protesters many of whom say were severely hurt by rough police men.

"The authorities are afraid of their own citizens and they do not want citizens to influence what is happening in the country," Mikhail Kasyanov, also an Other Russia leader, told Reuters.

"On the eve of the elections ... of course the authorities are terribly scared of that and today's excessive actions by the police are proof of that," said Kasyanov, a former prime minister under Putin. Reuters

2 suicide bombers attack US targets in Casablanca

CASABLANCA, MOROCCO—TWO SUICIDE bombers blew themselves up outside US diplomatic offices in Morocco's commercial hub Casablanca on Saturday in the first such attack in Morocco in four years, witnesses said.

The bloodshed coincided with a US embassy warning in neighboring Algeria that armed groups might strike in Algiers again, less than a week after suicide bombers have ordered financial returns to the Salfasalt Algerian outfits of the 1990s.

Only the bombers were killed in the Casablanca attacks, no one was wounded.

Another city in the country in Morocco and the same implosions that killed 33 in Algiers on Wednesday signal a sharp expansion in the threat from armed groups seeking to establish Islamic rule in north Africa.

The increasingly bold bombers are posing a tough test for governments trying to shore up stability in a region on Europe's southern flank that is dependent on a large chunk on oil and gas exports and tourism. Reuters

FROM UKRAINE WITH LOVE The winner of the Miss Ukraine 2007 beauty contest, Lika Romas, smiles after receiving the winner's crown in Kiev on April 14. AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE

- Magic oust 76ers; Suns sustain bid /A38

SPORTS

Editor: Teddyboy S. Pelmoradas

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EMIRATES

Manny fails to impress Roach

Trainer gives Pacquiao passing mark—but barely: 'He toyed around'

By Roy Luarca and Francis Ochoa

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS—DESPITE MANNY Pacquiao's seemingly easy victory over Jorge Solis for the vacant WBC international super featherweight crown Saturday (Sunday in Manila), his trainers—Freddie Roach and Justin Fortune—were unimpressed.

ROACH: 5 on scale of 10

Fact is, Roach, who flew in from Davao Rim Saturday morning just to be at Pacquiao's corner, said his prized ward's performance merits what on a scale of 1-10.

"He was toying around," said Roach. "He knows that he can (walk) Juan Solis as he wasn't that serious.

Roach certainly is the best person to grade any Pacquiao performance.

The American trainer has been chiefly responsible for Pacquiao's metamorphosis from a no-holds-barred slugger into a speedy, complete fistic titan. And more than that, he hails from over view of how devastating the Filipino ring icon can be when he is at his ruthless best.

MANNY: A31

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Pacman fails to impress

From page A13

Although Hatch mostly sat in a corner on the other side of the Pacquiao corner Saturday night—he is focused on grooming Oscar De La Hoya for the Golden Boy's match against Floyd Mayweather Jr.—he was a most active participant in Pacquiao's fight previous to this, the one that had pundits ranking the Pacman as the best in the world pound-for-pound.

That was when Pacquiao fought Barrera in only 10 rounds for the featherweight title, the final page in their trilogy. Before Morales' stunning in Las Vegas, Pacquiao looked a level he today up to on fight day and put on a dominating performance that destroyed the Mexican ring legend in three rounds.

Pacquiao avoided five more consecutive unbeaten Solid Joel to gain world championship encounters.

And even then, March 6th, Pacquiao needed a wake-up call in the form of an accidental Solis headbutt to get into his true fight mode.

"It was only when he got cut, that he seemed on the beat," said the two-time Trainer of the Year. "Solis is a good fighter, but he is not yet in the level of Pacquiao."

Hatch is slated to fly back to Puerto Rico Sunday morning to continue training De La Hoya.

Barrera, who took over Pacquiao's training while Roach was publishing De la Hoya for the huge May 5 bout, refused Roach's recruitment.

"He would have beaten Solis earlier," said Barrera. "But he was taking it easy and blood flowed."

MIGHTY Pacquiao (right) misses a right against Jorge Solis. Justin Fortune believes Pacquiao could have evaded the fight earlier. —

Known to slacken off

Pacquiao has been known to slacken off when fighting the lowest fights in his division.

In Manila last year, the congressional candidate found himself locked against the ropes under a vicious and steady rain of blows from challenger Oscar Larios, who was a killer punch away from ending his night's vision. He grew more determined after the match.

Now, the pressure is on Pacquiao to live up to the expectations of his fans and the sport's fans to fight the best fights in the super featherweight ranks.

That near-slip also jolted Pacquiao to his senses. He hammered out two knockdowns before forging a decision against the then-lightly regarded Larios.

Dour Viloria blows title attempt again

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS—IT'S HARD TO BREAK a bad habit.

Filipino Brian Viloria promised he would be the aggressor against Mexican Edgar Sosa in their battle for the vacant WBC Synergie title featherweight belt Saturday.

He did, but only briefly.

The techno Sosa, the No. 2 contender, relied on a big final round to capture by majority decision the crown that had been stripped from unanimous Oscar Mas Romero.

While one judge ruled it a 114-114 tie, the two other judges gave the bout to Sosa by identical 115-113 decisions.

After bringing the fight to Sosa in the first round, Viloria went back to the ball-back stance while his employment the fight.

By the ninth round, the momentum was still on reverse with Viloria effectively counter-punching.

But it wasn't supposed to be that way.

The 26-year-old Viloria, who was bent in this state, stated in Barrowne, Sosa five and seven back to Hawaii when he was 7, was supposed to outpunch those who are willing to converge out up by his corn trainer Joe Goossen. Instead, the opposite happened.

Sosa peppered Viloria with more punches, won 536, and connected more, 210-155.

"My Oscar stepped up to the championship rounds," said Viloria, who has earned ship wi 19 wins, 1 draw and two losses.

The defeat sent Viloria out of the championship orbit of the 126 pound division where he became a champion in 2005. He yielded the title in Mexican Omar Wres had two and was forced to a down by Mexican three rematch.

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Concepcion emulates 'Kuya Manny'

By Ray Laurea

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS—IT PAYS to be in the company of the world's best fighters. Sometimes, his intensity and determination will rub off on you.

Bernabe Concepcion, given the golden opportunity to train alongside Manny Pacquiao, bucked an injured right hand to pound out a unanimous decision win over Texas Benjamin Flores and to earn his WBC "fourth super bantamweight crown in the opener of the Mike of Glory card at the Alamodome here.

The 10-year old Bird From Ilocos, Concepcion, fears his hand after hitting Flores with a straight followed by an upper cut in the second round. But he ignored the pain to earn the nod of the three judges, 97-93, 96-94, 97-93.

"I really wanted a lot from Kuya Manny," said Concepcion in Filipino. "But only in fight tips but also in training. He serves as my inspiration."

Egged on by his corner, Concepcion even managed to suggest Flores with an upper cut in the fourth round but failed to deliver the killer follow-up.

"This victory is for my country and my veteran peers," said Concepcion, who moved to Pacquiao's gym (Sweet and trained with him as the Wild Card Gym in Los Angeles and at the Jesse James Leija Gym here.

Concepcion said he is very grateful to Pacquiao for giving him valuable pointers and insights, not to mention streaming and boisterous mates.

The 5-foot-5 Concepcion improved his record to 33 wins (11 knockouts), 1 draw and 2 loses.

The cold as his hometown, but we told him not to give up," said Ailen Anti, Concepcion's trainer-manager.

Flores fell to 34-3 (30 KOs).

BITAMAM Concepcion (right) pummels Benjamin Flores. —

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Bleak prospects for more SEA Games sports, events

By Jose Mesiera

IT SEEMS IT WILL BE A SLIM CHANCE THAT more sports will appear as a Philippine contingent for the inclusion of more events in the 24th Southeast Asian Games set late this year in Bangkok and succeeding years.

"I don't think they (hosts) will grant our request to add more events," said Philippine Olympic Committee deputy secretary general Mark Joseph yesterday.

"It wasn't the same when we hosted the games in 1995 where we can up the stage for everybody to shine by including as many events as possible," added the country's swimming diva.

The POC will push for the inclusion of squash, gymnastics, body building, chess and aerobics—all outstanding in the roster of disciplines to be showcased in the biennial meet.

POC secretary general Steve Hontiveros, who will represent the POC in the SEAG Federation meeting next month, is also expected to ask for additional events in women's and traditional sports.

A total of 45 disciplines with 443 gold medals at stake have been approved during the last SEAG Federation meeting a few months back.

During the 2005 Manila Games which the country emerged as overall champions for the first time, the national contingent won 87 gold medals at stake in traditional host sites. Wushu also contributed 11 golds out of 26 events.

This year, the SEAG Federation has limited traditional host to two gold medals and wushu was allotted only 12 events.

JOSEPH

SPORTSWATCH

Tuason-Valley golf draws record field

A FIELD OF 288 PLAYERS HAS REGISTERED FOR the Ilin Tuason Cotter Tuason-sons Valley Founders Memorial tournament 19 to 22 at the Valley Golf and Country Club in Antipolo City.

Already the country's biggest two-day sport tournament, the 4th joins — 10 more than last year's field — will tee off in batches over two days.

Antipolo mayors are scheduled to fire a six-gun 12 blows, including executive and south courses.

Club president Dr. Jun Orbeso and the organizing committee headed by Bobby Kwan said the tournament will have a Skins elimination.

Also, a point system, worth a total of 972 rabbits, includes a Mitsubishi Strada as title. For the south course, a point 924 as title. For executive course, a Suzuki Alto as No. 6 (selected). Title for overall, 6 (double) and Honorable (all combo 72 bogeys).

The Ilin Tuason sons of the organizing committee are Mark De Alma, Percy del Rosario, Cecile Bugarin, Elna Ranola, Dave Tuason, Pete Manlapaz, Mac Moreno, Luis Pardo, Mac Peters, Marley Dalangin, Jose Sabbaluca and Boboi Tuason.

Peter and guest Michael Lucio are the defending champions.

PCAP derby fires off in Makati

SEVENTY-TWO GOLF TEAMS ARE ON THE RIDE in the opening leg of the Philippine Thoroughbred Owners Association (PTOA) Derby Cup and Grand Stakes race at the Makati Coliseum. The first flight of the program backed by El Shaq Derby Ale and Grand Stakes is at 6 p.m. Makers run the race to the PCAP Garden within four years. Ale Ale and Ale Ale Ale Ale are by and Randy Sy and Edwin Yap (Michael Jim) and the field with 1823 points each. Flight fastest with 17 each are Elmo Garden (Braulio Bell) and Rainie Rose (Nita Maximo), followed by Tim Sy Motors (Rose Lagman), Makers Cup (Ramoren) and Ram Lopez (Dave M.) 8 with 1815 each.

King of Ring round 3 today

THE 25th EDITION OF THE KING OF RING is slated today at the Philippine Sports Stadium with the third round of eliminations featuring 80 fights. Sponsored by Lakpue Drugstore and Foundation Limited, the battle royal starts at 1 p.m. A total of 32 participants, made into 4 bracketed in 8 championship rounds after the first two qualifying rounds last week. Richard Bun (P2 million in guaranteed prizes await the winners. Head Rudy Lagos attributed the big number of entries to the easy-to-understand rules of the competition. "We have only 3 rounds for the 1st elimination, three entries and the winners struggle down to win the championship," said Lagos.

Harbour-RP bags Champs Cup

HARBOUR Centre-RP players and team officials, led by team founder Wilson Bonnett (beside Mascot, No. 13), celebrate their victory.

By Jaemilar W. Paya

MANILA — AT THE TEAM HUNT INTO A huddle during a timeout, a fan waved a giant Philippines flag from the stands. Players looked up and smiled, clearly aware, whichever the support of more than a hundred of their countrymates.

The Filipinos then would have more to cheer their appreciation as Harbour Centre-Philippines and 5 dispatched Amin Shah Brunei Indonesia, 85-67, Saturday night to bag the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) Champions Cup.

Point guard Hiroto Gray and import Julius Nevara delivered outstanding games in the Division sweeping a 79-75 loss in the Indonesians in the eliminations and secured a slot for the country in the Fiba-Asia Champions Cup in Tehran, Iran, in May.

Coach Chot Reyes and a separate national crew made up of PBA stars will represent the country in the regional meet as part of its preparation for the Olympic qualifying tournament in Santiago, Japan in late July.

Gray unloaded 20 points on top of six assists and three steals while the 6-foot-5 Nigerian Nevara neutralized the Indons' 6-11 Darwadas establishment. Ian Gruendler in the second half while adding 18 points and 16 boards.

Nevara, a former Fiba import, went on to clinch the Finals' Most Valuable Player plaque while Gray emerged as top assist man with 5.2/3.5 finals game.

"I had nervousness and apprehension," admitted coach Jamel Barak after the game. "The Indonesians have potential and they have better imports than us. I only had two hours of sleep because I kept thinking about our game."

"I know my role and I told the team (for 12-minutes) round going to do anything," said Nevara, who was also cited as best rebounder for averaging a tournament best 15.5 boards per game.

"The problem before was communication," said Barak. "But Sarah and the imports didn't understand each other. We settled that."

Shrub shooter Jonathan Fernandez and JCkyal also provided huge contributions as Harbour-RP spotted a 49-25 halftime lead while 6-1 outrageous Ilpan Imaka effortlessly harassed Indonesia's other import, Heath Deane.

Danny De 6-6 Sinenian Indon guard, hit only 1-of-7 three-pointers and 6-of-13 free throws.

"Our imports didn't play too well," said Hatta Hasing, head coach of the defending champion squad of the Indonesian Basketball League.

"Our local players stepped up, but the Filipinos played very very good. We squeezed them... (numbers 7 Jamel, 4 Gimbal, 5 Cruz, 13 Ordonez). We know that Filipino players are one level higher than Indonesian (or ASEAN)."

"The game made me personally proud to be a Filipino," said Harbour Centre owner and team financier Mike Romero. "I was touched when the Fiba officials handed over the Fiba Asia entry form and said this is a historical moment. After a two-year (Fiba) suspension, we're back."

All four starters — Bonnett, import Hilal Hamdi, Jamel, Arana and Cruz — scored as HP took a 10-2 lead. Back-to-back triples by Fernandez stretched the lead to 22-8.

Indonesia mused within seven, 26-19, behind Gruendler and Chacra in the second quarter but Jamel and Fernandez quickly responded with back-to-back trays for a 40-25 halftime HP lead.

Nevara provided the exclamation point by scoring on a slank and then drawing a foul after an alley-oop pass from Bonnett with only two-seconds left in the shot clock. Nevara completed the three-point play for an 85-66 HP lead.

The score

PHILIPPINES (85) — Gray 20, Nevara 16, Fernandez 10, Jamel 15, Arana 7, Bonnett 8, Cruz 4, Ordonez 4, Hamdi 2, Lanete 0, Mangahas 0, Dingal 0, Pinlac 0, Ilpan 0.

INDONESIA (67) — Gruendler 18, Chacra 15, Cassandra 12, Ahmad 11, Sutanto 6, Achmad 5, Pamungkas 1, Wijaya 2, Sudirman 2, Hasan 2, Adhi 2, Sutanto 0, Ismail 0, Alam 0, Adhi 0.

Quarters: 25-8, 40-25, 66-46, 85-67.

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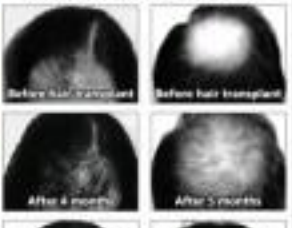


A. PINEDA MEDICAL CLINICS

UZBEKISTAN'S Ruslan Chagaev (right), despite standing 11 inches shorter and weighing 90 pounds lighter, finds a way to tame the brave Ivi Mikalul Valuev to claim the Russian's heavyweight crown. – AP

'White Tyson' bucks size difference, tames 'Beast from the East' for title

STUTTGART, GERMANY—RUSLAN CHAGAEV won the WBA heavyweight boxing title from Nikolai Valuev with a majority decision on Saturday.

The taller and heavier Valuev lost the championship in his fourth defense since winning the belt 14 months ago.

The judges ruled for Chagaev 117-111 and 115-113, while the third tallied it 114-114.

Valuev's record dropped to 46-1 with a no decision, ending his bid to break Vitali Klitschko's record of 49-0 without a defeat.

The Russian blamed the loss on his legs.

"Today I made a lot of mistakes and Ruslan was a few points ahead," Valuev said. "My biggest mistake was the surprise in my legs was too good."

Chagaev, The Uzbekistan fighter who calls himself "White Tyson," gave away 26 cm (ten inches) and 44 kilos (90 pounds) to the 2.13-meter (7 foot) Valuev.

But in the fourth round, he solved Valuev's jab which had kept him at bay. After that, the fight turned into a slugfest, the kind Chagaev—a fighter who throws a lot of punches—wanted.

"Boy was it lonely who said Nikolai was too big and heavy for me, we'll its not important that I am smaller now, is it?" Chagaev said.

The 28-year-old, a former amateur world champion, ran his record to 23-0-1 with 17 knockouts.

Valuev won his previous title defenses outjabbing smaller opponents but Chagaev barged inside and caught Valuev with a left and short right to the temple in the fourth round and grew bolder.

He won the next three rounds the same way before 35-year-old Valuev hit him with renewed quick shots to take the eighth.

The pain stood out on son in the 12th, being the 6,000 spectators in their feet. Valuev took a hard left just before the bell.

"He did not throw tonight and smashed Ruslan," Chagaev trainer Michael Timm. "We disciplined Ruslan for 12 rounds, telling him he had to make Valuev attack and he would running."

Chagaev used unorthodox methods to get a feel for Valuev's size, including trainer Michael Timm standing on a box during training.

"I know a thing or two about boxing bigger favored opponents," Chagaev said.

As an amateur, he won one of his five to beat Cuban great Felix Savon, a 1.98 meter (6-5) fighter. He was named the No. 1 WBA mandatory challenger after a November split decision win against former champ John Ruiz.

But Chagaev came into the fight a heavy underdog against the Russian.

"If was a giant, giant fight—heavy then anyone expected," said Don King, Valuev's promoter. AP

PLAYOFF RACE

Magic oust 76ers; Suns sustain bid

ANATOMY OF A DUNK: Grant Hill jumps as an orchestration point on the Phoenix Suns' man of the Utah Jazz. –

PHILADELPHIA—DWIGHT HOWARD WAS PERfect for a half and dominant the whole game, scoring a career-high 35 points with 11 rebounds to lead the Orlando Magic over the 76ers 104-87 that eliminated Philadelphia from the NBA playoff race on Saturday.

Orlando strengthened to hold on eighth place, moving two games ahead of Indiana.

Howard made all 14 shots in the first half and passed his previous high of 33 points with a free throw late in the fourth quarter 1½ second left in the first period.

In Salt Lake City, Steve Nash had 16 assists, Leandro Barbosa scored 20 points and the Phoenix Suns increased the Utah Jazz, 126-88, to move one step closer to clinching the No. 2 seed in the Western Conference.

The Suns won third title in a row and need to win one of their last two or have San Antonio lose once in its final three games to lock up the second best record in the NBA playoffs (#1 DET) to one of the first-nine rounds for series.

Phoenix had 98 points in the first three quarters as against the Jazz, who couldn't keep up with the home breaks out coup Phoenix from the outside.

Phoenix was 10 for 22 from 3-point range and made 36 of 51 field shots.

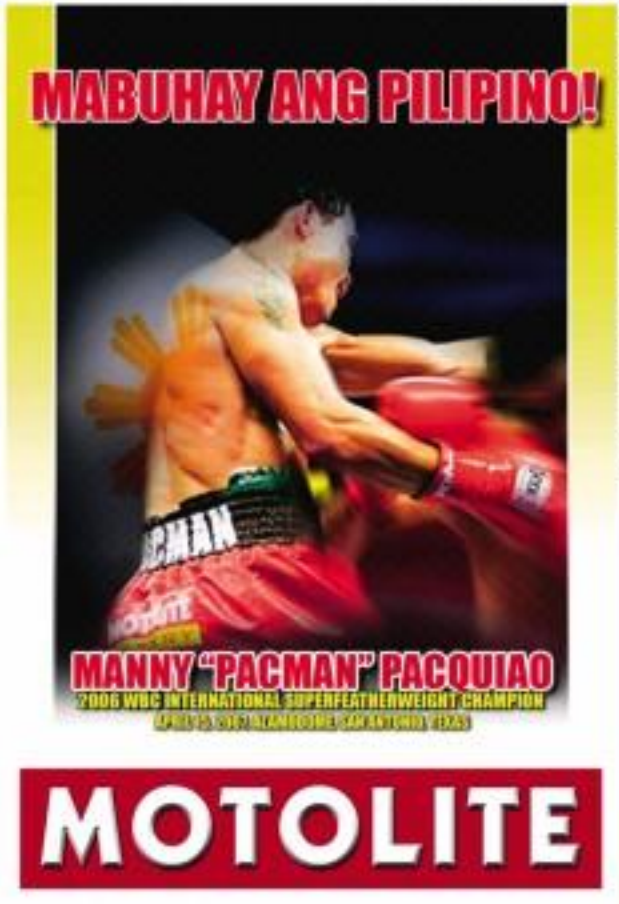
The Jazz lost for the ninth time in seven games and fell two games behind Houston in the race for home-court advantage in the first round of the playoffs. Mehmet Okur led Utah with 20 points and 13 rebounds.

In Cleveland, LeBron James scored 25 points, Sasha Pavlovic added 19 and the Cavaliers ran the floor at will to crush the Atlanta Hawks, 119-76.

Cleveland's 48th—and most lopsided win—this season, kept the Cavaliers unbeaten with idle Chicago for the No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference playoffs. Both teams have two games left with the Bulls, holding the tiebreaker because of a better record in the division.

Zydrunas Ilgauskas had 13 points and 11 rebounds and Larry Hughes 12 points for the Cavs, who built a 26-point lead by halftime against the overmatched Hawks, scoring leading scorer Joe Johnson and several key players due to injuries.

In other games, it was: the Memphis Grizzlies 113, Denver Nuggets 110; Houston Rockets 125, New Orleans Hornets 112; Charlotte Bobcats 113, Milwaukee Bucks 92; and Portland Trail Blazers 106, Seattle SuperSonics 102. AP



Kelly passes Verizon leader Els with ace

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, South Carolina—Jerry Kelly had a hole-in-one on the par-3 fourth during the third round of the Verizon Heritage on Saturday.

Kelly was two shots behind leader Ernie Els when he stepped to the tee of the 206-yard hole. His 6-iron shot hit the green, bounced to the flagstick and dropped to give Kelly a share of the lead.

Kelly shot a 67 and took a one-stroke lead over Els (71) and Kevin Na (66).

Els, Kelly's playing partner, gave him a high-five and Kelly raised both arms in celebration.

At the green, Kelly pulled the ball out of the cup while the crowd cheered. He cradled his arm as if to throw the ball into the gallery, then stopped and shook his head while smiling broadly.

Kelly had the bronze this league's 12th hole-in-one. It was the first during tournament play at Harbour Town Golf Links since Blaine McCallister and Jeff Sluman did it in 1996.

Kelly said today's final "four or five" tees in competition to be known here to get past the excitement and considers that normal with every golfer's dream. "If it was for a boat or the car it might have been a different story," Kelly joked. "But I was more disappointed I didn't get anything for it."

Call that backtracking. And Kelly used the par-3 warmth, he would've received a 23-foot, seven-pound, talking boat worth $50,000.

Instead, Kelly will have to be satisfied with the momentous swing he gained from the shot. He went on to make birdie on the final six holes of his eight-under-par 64 to lead the field by three shots.

Els said Kelly's ace shot looked good the whole way. The "most beautiful shot you've ever seen," Els said. "But, still, on par, we've made a few of those good looking shots, but they don't really go in. That one went in the hole." AP

Embattled RP chess bets vow fightback

ANTONIO: 1/1 points

TORRE: 1/1 points

ILIOILO... PLUMBO CHESS PLAYERS, LED by Grandmaster Rogelio Antonio Jr. and Eugene Torre, remained upbeat despite an early shock of home bet Mariandrea Sadullos halfway through the Philippine Open chess championship of the Legenda Hotel here.

Six of nine Chinese players, led by top seed GM Wang Hao, are in the top 10 of the standings going into the fifth round of the $40,000 tournament.

"Mapagkumpitensya pero may pag-asa pa [They are all strong, but we still have a chance]," said Antonio, the country's highest-rated player with an Elo 2630, referring to Wang and the rest of the highly-rated Chinese contingent.

"Depende sa resulting makukuha ko laban sa mga [Who will try our worst against each of the] Chinese," added Antonio, who had 2.5 points like Torre Abigahtsuhakan to as (3-with-a-record-in-the) next three rounds."

Three straight draws from the second round elevated Torre Antonio's bid.

The Chinese players, however, are not the only newcomers in the Philippines.

Iranian GM Ehsan Ghaem Maghami Ghaem is in a bun way so far the lead with Chinese players Wang and GMs Zhang Zhong and Wang Hao with 3.5 points.

American GM Varuzhan Akobian held his ground against Wang for a draw in the third round and led a big group of players with three points.

And there is Indonesian GM Susanto Megaranto, who posted rare, well-earned draws against higher-rated opponents to stay in the thick of the fight for the US$6,000 top purse.

Aside from Antonio and Torre, the other Filipino players studiously-still in the title hunt are GM Ishah Paragua, GMO Cayabyab and Julian Chua, IM Oliver Barbosa, Mariandrea Sadullos, Elvis Montero, Jake Catalino Sadorra and Nitz Rodriguez Bello, Rhodessa Maga and Adan Cabo.

GM-candidate Wesley So is surprisingly out of the magic circle with only two points to show after four matches.

The 13-year-old So, who is hoping to nail his third and last GM norm, was his first two assignment before losing the next two against Zhang and Hao.

Afternoon Delight goes wire-to-wire

By Mazzag B. Cuello

CARMONA, CAVITE...AFTERNOON DELIGHT broke out of the gate hard and left everyone eating his dust en route to the Philippine Turf Club Stakes by two lengths here Sunday morning.

No one could match the pace set by the black offspring of horse American stallion Assessment's Cause out of Belle Epoque as Jessie S. Grace completed the route-to-route win by applying little punishment to the final straight.

The win clearly installed the Hernie Isaguerra colt as a bright prospect for the coming Triple Crown series that starts in May.

Afternoon Delight, who sold 420,411 units of the total double handle of 964,792, clocked an impressive 1.23.3 (23, 24 , 25, 25) over 1,500 meters for the P760,000 top purse.

Beating through were P281,250.

"You can say that he will be one of the favorites, especially if his improvement continues," Isaguerra, who notched the race from his base in Batangas, told the INQUIRER over the phone.

"But the Triple Crown is still a long way ahead and it is our job to keep him (Afternoon Delight) in top condition before that race comes."

The owner/ field was left to give desperate chase, with the other speedballs, Music King and Jessie's pick Eve Francis, suffering in the face of Afternoon Delight's blistering pace to finish well-out of the money.

Lord Birds, a starter, checked to third a week behind the Cesar Tamano-owned Beating Through, while Golden Native, another Isaguerra entry, was fourth another length behind rookie Dominador Borbe.

Cipher Cruz, a contender of the great Sonic of the 1970s, won fifth, with Superamerican, who was sent off as the third choice, finishing sixth in round out the Super Six field that did not produce a winner.

The race was a leading to the Tri Series "Breakout Ads won the Fillies' side at the Santa Ana last week by timing 1.35 also over 1,500 meters.

Young triathletes share limelight in NAGT 2nd leg

YOUNG TRIATHLETES SHARED THE LIMElight with their older counterparts in yesterday's 2nd leg of the Speedo National Age Group Triathlon Championship (NAGT) at the scenic Lakeshore in Molave, Zamboanga.

Thirteen of the 90 winners in the race organized by the Triathlon Association of the Philippines (Triap) competed in the inaugural three-division Super Kids race, which was held alongside the different age group competitions.

Seven-year-old Ingrid Alcuin led the initial batch of swimmers in the 7-15 age bracket.

Admirals Pi Bonito joined Alcuin on the podium in the female class as she sailed the 15-31 clinic.

The top three male finishers in their respective categories were Kit Kristian Sevaris, Gulf Nikiforuk and Miguel Celario (7 years); Erik Stevens, Brian Bellere and Manuel Tanedeno (12 years) and Seamus Bellere, Tommy Sanchez and Joshua Daniel Pe Benito (13-15).

"We will officially launch the Super Kids triathlon this Sunday at Star's Dirt in Ayala Alabang where we invite more 100 participants to compete in the aquabiker and duathlon event," said Tiap president Tito Carrasco Jr.

Asieh Serrano and Anna Geronimo, both 14, also displayed their wares as they dominated the 14-19 class in the NAGT race, which was supported by Lakeshore, Gatorade, Fitness First and Dandi Salon.

Serrano clocked one hour, 47 minutes and 20 seconds in negotiating the 1.5km swim, 39-km bike and 7.4-km run. Andrew Gonzalez was second and Lorenz Magsaysay third.

Geronimo ruled her division in 2:13.06, finishing ahead of Arellen Evelyn Rabaca, a FE Corrigan belle who discovered in the 16 leg held in Davao.

Other winners in the female category were Olivia May Cervantes and Mariel Nicolas in the 20-29 class and Cathy Bedia, Angeline Dimaandal and Josefa Gaspino in the 30-39 group.

The elite women's title went to Jessa Zaldivar, who also won the 25-29 class, while Jonel Ribano and Haydee Tala (25-29), as are Abby Aquino and Jen Dizon (30-34), and Jessa Arcinue Mapa, Vincent Hoang and Carol Hoang (35-39), Lara Gaerlan, Noemi Paul-Yuan and up-to-stamps (40-44), Ney Mesa, Mariflor Cabrera and Jo Ann Ong (45-49), Hazel Quiroz, Isabelle Gutierrez and Ann Ann (50-54) and Ana Lopez, Isabelle Gutierrez and Ann Ann (55-59) and Ana Lopez (60-69).

"Your very strong run during technical in Serrano, as we had to revise and simplify our run, since with the heavy rainfall the night before the competition," said the multitalented Asian, one of the country's first representatives to the triad. Isaac Bellere competition in their the next.

"We didn't expect to be that competitive, so we were pleasantly surprised that we ended up with two others in the nationals," added Arcinue.

The medalled NLDC juveniles Jon Bon Arcinue and fellow member Michelle Alden for the triad (3-5m) showing.

KAREN Arcinue and Jong Lopez display their form en route to a pair of silver medals.

Race car driver Anton, dance partner shine

BACOLOD CITY'S RAMON MAGSAYSAY...ANTON overcame a pumbah (bogey) to clinch an Arellano "Jing" Lopez in a pair of silver medals for the 16th Asian Inter-Series Championship of the Universal Sports Council of the Philippines recently at the Ramon Sport Complex in Pasig City.

Anton, who sustained the injury during practice just two days before the competition, used Lopez to record a second in the Cha-Cha-Cha and a bronze for the highly heated Rhythm Cha-Cha-Cha-

PBA hires Fiba ref as consultant

PBA SERVICE AND CLINIC DIRECTOR ALAN Velasco has arrived today for a short consultancy stint in the Philippine Basketball Association. The retired Fiba official has been contracted by the PBA as technical consultant to look his expertise in Asia's first ever professional league, particularly in the aspect of officiating. "Essentially, Mr. Velasco's work will be providing our referees with concepts perspectives of the game of basketball," said technical director Perry Martinez. Commissioner Rudy Salud said the hiring of the British referee is a part of the PBA's determined effort to elevate league officiating. Rizal stalwart Velasco is currently in charge of officiating the Fiba Asia Championship for Men and the Fiba Asia Championship for Women.

Canete, Cordero show class, seize nat'l titles

TOP COLLEGIATE PLAYER JAMES Carl Canete overpowered Aldo Sy, 6-2, 6-4, yesterday to nail the 18-under B-title in the 8th Trades National Age Group Tennis Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

The victory was the first in the age bracket for the fourth-seeded Canete, the reigning 12&U Doubles champion from the University of Santo Tomas.

College Ace Ignatio stunned Kyle Cordero downed the third-seed 6-0, 6-1 demolition of Laurence Higuerra to bag the 16-under crown.

Cordero put away his second title in the 14-under class by walkover after Bernardine Vito dropped the final match records a flight to India.

Cebu-based top seed Jacob Lagunzad took the boys' 12-under title over No. 2 Christian Cardoz, 6-0, 6-2, while top seed Dane Salas outplayed No. 2 Elise Mark Velayito, 6-2, 7-6 (7) to take the crown 10-under class.

In girls' play Ms. Regina Santiago downed Bulacan's Jessica, 6-2, 6-4, to win the 18-under title and then blasted Sally Mae Sias, 6-1, 6-3, to win 16-under final.

Sias redeemed herself in the 14-under class when she beat Shanine Mae Oliveros, 6-2, 6-4, for the title.

Nikki Lopez beat Akiko de Guzman, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, in the 12-under final.

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BUSINESS

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INTEGRATED COMPUTER SYSTEMS, INC.

IMF raises export growth outlook for RP

Shipments seen rising 10.9% this year

By Doris C. Dumlao

WASHINGTON DC—THE INTERnational Monetary Fund has upgraded its export growth outlook for the Philippines to 10.9 percent this year and 10.4 percent next year despite a sharply appreciating currency.

In its Asia-Pacific regional economic outlook report for 2007 released here, the IMF said in areas of Southeast Asia's five biggest economies—Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam or Asean 5—"the effects of somewhat stronger exchange rates were outweighed by foreign demand as EU consumption remained resilient and the recovery in Europe gained pace."

(BF) B2

Listless trading seen

(Click on stock market report on Page B8)

IN THIS ISSUE

■ **At least 6 more** firms holding IPOs this year /B7

■ **Farm sector seen** growing 7-8% in '08 /B12

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GMA-7 sales rose 12%, profit slipped 2% in '06

By Elisabeth Sanchez Lacson

GMA NETWORK INC. POSTED CONSOLIDATED revenues of P11.16 billion in 2006, 12-percent higher than its P9.9 billion sales in 2005.

However, net income after tax, or dipped 2 percent to P1.07 billion from P1.1 billion in 2005 due to the full-year effect of a mandated increase in corporate income tax rate to 35 percent from 32 percent effective November 2005, GMA-7 said in a statement.

The company said the network's international channel, GMA Pinoy TV, penned substantial growth propelled by its expanding subscriber base. GMA Pinoy TV closed 2006 with almost 126,000 subscribers.

The company's five channel, QTV, contributed P202 million in revenues in its first full year of operation.

The group's production cost, on the other hand, increased 29 percent to P5.72 billion due to the programming of QTV.

Consolidated general and administrative expenses rose 11 percent to P2.6 billion due to additional operating costs related to the newly launched business segments.

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA) grew 19 percent to P4 billion from the previous year.

GMA-7 also said that it maintained its lead in TV ratings for 2006, based on Mega Manila TV ratings data from research firm AGB Nielsen for 2006. GMA posted an average total day rating of 37.6 percent against rival ABS-CBN's 33.4 percent.

Nineteen of the top 20 overall TV programs for 2006 were from GMA. In addition, 44 of the top 50 daytime programs and 19 of the top 30 evening or primetime programs were also from GMA.

The company is also banking on improving its signal and program distribution capabilities in key provinces. Cagayan de Oro, General Santos City, Bacolod, Iloilo City, Batangas province and Legazpi City will all be covered by new transmitter facilities while Mega City will be the site of a new originating station and transmitter, GMA-7 said.

IMF . . .

From page B1

During its previous Asia Pacific report in September 2006, the IMF was expecting the Philippines to post much lower export growths of 7.6 percent for this year and 7.3 percent for 2008 from an estimated expansion of 13.1 percent last year.

The forecast growth for Philippine exports is seen supporting a growth in gross domestic product of 5.4 percent for this year and next.

The region's forecast for the country for 2007 was the highest within Asean-5, although followed closely by the projected expansion of 6.6 percent for Vietnam this year. The average export growth within the sub-region is 8.2 percent, almost half the 16-percent projected expansion for the whole of non-outside Japan.

The outlier point for non-strong Asia's emerging markets remained China and India, which are expected to fuel the whole region's export growth this year with respective export growths of 30.4 percent and 34.2 percent. For next year, China and India will still be the region's anchor with forecast export growths of 18.8 percent and 16.8 percent.

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Beyond open skies

I DON'T EXPECT Air has two columns to share as much reader response, all from one day. Out of hundred of mailed volunteered more observations into having the view that restricting air access to our country is hurting us more than it is helping.

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito Habito

Trailing Vietnam

One reading in Vietnam contends our government's recent moves with what her host country is doing. "So many low-cost carriers like Tiger Airways and Air Asia have daily flights to Ho Chi Minh City from Singapore, Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur. As a result, many more tourists are arriving in Vietnam. Other budget airlines are planning to enter the country. There are resorts being opened in many places throughout Vietnam. It is easy for tourists to get around the country. Tourist infrastructure is being built fast. Compare this to the Philippines which is reversing its pro-tourism policy."

And the writer: "Vietnam will very soon surrender to it it has not yet done so) in many aspects of development, including tourism. Compared to the Philippines, it has many more interesting places (cultural centers, beaches, mountains, ethnic minorities, beautiful landscapes, etc.) for tourists to see. It seems all we can offer are beaches and gold resorts. This is why we should work doubly hard to get tourists to visit our country."

Cold facts

A reader based in India writes: "Here are the cold facts on airline reciprocity. The Philippines has Air Services Agreements with practically all EU and the Middle Eastern countries and they can fly to the Philippines and enjoy the traffic rights granted to them under these bilaterals many years ago. Until our Philippine carriers either serve and throw reciprocal rights or have abandoned using them. From Europe, Lufthansa, Air France, KLM, Middle East and ME, among others fly daily to Manila. From the Middle East you have Emirates, Emirates, Gulf Air, Qatar Airlines and Bahrain Airways. Pakistan is also using all their traffic rights enthusiastic under the bilaterals, without a single Philippine carrier using the awarded reciprocal rights. Even from Macau, PAL just code shares with Air Macau, giving many what they say are very valuable 'reciprocal rights.'"

He asks: "So what are they up to when they oppose JG's 100-R, which is just a "pusher" type open-skies regime for two secondary airports, where they are not using valuable traffic rights given by foreign governments to major capitals of the world from our main gateways?"

Sticker shock!

Some readers point out that while opening our skies is crucial, we need to do much more beyond that. A reader who had just

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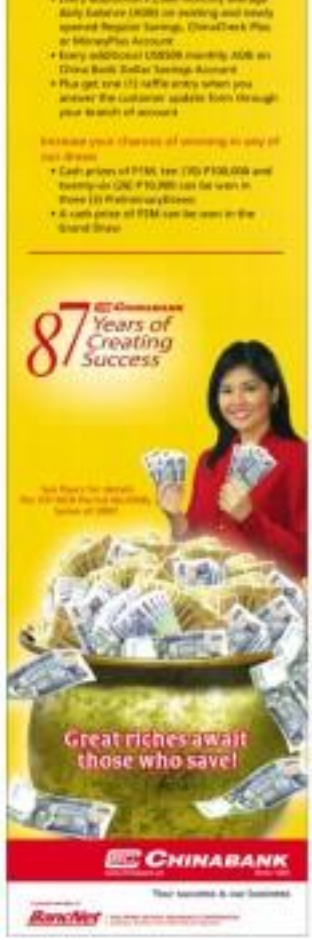

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HK airline to launch daily Clark flights starting April 20

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By Rica T. Obcherista

HONG KONG AIRLINES LTD. (HAL) is set to resume daily flights to and from the Clark International Airport (DMIA) in Pampanga starting April 20.

HAL, which has a fleet of Boeing 737-800s, is in the process of rapid growth and has standing orders for the Boeing 777-300s and 787 aircraft, as it expands its regional and global network.

HAL managing director Li Qiang said Friday that there has been a surge in Chinese tourists at the Clark Freeport Zone and Angeles City just four months after DMIA inaugurated its first flight on Dec. 15 last year.

"The Hong Kong-Clark-Hong Kong flights of the airline has been popular among Filipinos travelers visiting the tourist attractions of Hong Kong such as Disneyland, which opened last year," he said.

According to Li, shuttle services between DMIA and Manila will be made available to travelers for free as a bid to ease traveling via Clark. HAL also serves food and refillable drinks.

He also said the company was finalizing plans for adding 15 kilograms to the regular 20-kg baggage allocation for inbound and outbound flights, which is 50 percent more than other airlines.

Clark International Airport Corp. president Victor Jose Lucious said he welcomed the increase in flights of HAL at the DMIA as a positive development. He said more tourists would mean more jobs to be created.

Li added that the leader in Hong Kong flights at DMIA boosted the country's prospects of benefiting from the growing number of Chinese tourists, estimated at 40 million travelers a year.

HAL is also expected to demonstrate cooperation in the country's major airports with its new touring strategy.

In the Philippines, Hong Kong Airlines has the corporate backing of the Guangxian group of companies through its affiliate, Hong Kong Airlines Holdings Inc.

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From page B1

traveled to Malaysia and Singapore observed: "One could have a very decent, clean air-conditioned meal in Singapore for about P116, and P120 in Malaysia on the average, there one has to spend upwards of P200 to find a decent air-conditioned clean meal just to savor the local culinary specialties."

He further observes: "Gone's the first impression upon arrival in Manila would be what to check from the moment they land a cab. In Singapore, travelers with different budgets could be accommodated. One could take the MRT or bus (cheap and safe) for those on a budget, taxi and limo service for the ones who could afford more. A five-star hotel in Manila costs US$175 up per night, equivalent US$ 110 in Singapore and lower in Malaysia. One could get a full accommodation (3d/2n a 3 meals/ day with island hopping/snorkeling and other activities) in one of the islands in Malaysia, similar in Bohol, for 380 RM or about P4,200. Imagine that what one would spend to arrive alone to get in one of our resort islands. Even OFW professionals prefer to take their vacation in Thailand rather than Boracay since the facilities are better, yet cheaper."

Ruined environment

A foreign reader who describes himself as a world traveler laments: "Of the places that I travel to, the Philippines has the worst accommodations, the highest prices and the worst food and service. People are not going to return to the Philippines after being choked with polluted air, eating water in filthy streets glutted with garbage and being ripped off at every turn. Somehow Filipinos must clean up their act if they expect people to come to the islands and then go back to their own country and tell their friends that the Philippines is a wonderful place." He adds: "Filipinos must learn to accept that they have destroyed the natural beauty of the land and the environment, and that it is time to clean house."

Myopic economics

A reader adds: "Our tourism promo should rethink its proposal of taxing the tourist an additional $5/night, but be done off the line that will patronize our resorts." This reminded me of the lament of a longtime Australian resident in Manila, whose son had just spent several months (and several thousand dollars) vacationing in the Philippines. His son enjoyed it so much that he wanted to emigrate, but in his more mature—but get turned off by the hefty sum being charged of him by the government to extend his visa. He asks, "why would the government grant visa-free entry to visitors from remote ordered of places from where we'll never get any tourists, but cuts off visa-free from precisely where we could potentially attract thousands more of tourists, with steep visa fees?"

It seems to me some people in government are getting their economics all wrong.

Comments are welcome at chabis@inquirer.com.ph.

High crude prices jack up import bill by 20%

Local consumption of oil products down

By Abigail L. Ho

DESPITE LOWER IMPORT VOLUMES, THE country's net oil import bill in 2006 rose 20 percent, or $6.8 billion, to a record $41.7 billion.

This was due to the rising world market prices of crude.

According to data from the Department of Energy, net oil imports—or trade and petroleum product imports minus exports—dropped 2.8 percent to 188.4 million barrels last year from 193.86 million barrels in 2005.

The country last year consumed 181 million barrels of petroleum products, down 7.4 percent from the 2005 consumption of 189 million barrels. The average daily consumption declined to 276,500 barrels in 2006 from 298,200 barrels in 2005.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said a rebound the drop in the demand for petroleum products is high prices and is government stimulus and demand-side management programs.

Of all the petroleum products being consumed in the country, the decline in demand was most pronounced in kerosene at 20.2 percent, followed by fuel oil at 17 percent.

Gasoline demand fell by 6.6 percent, diesel consumption by 1.4 percent, and liquefied petroleum gas rate by 5.2 percent.

Based on DOE records, the country's daily oil consumption was highest in 2003 at 305,000 barrels. This dropped to 229,000 barrels in 2004 and to 276,500 barrels last year.

Lotilla said alternative fuels such as biodiesel and bio-ethanol had yet to make a significant dent on the country's oil import bill as these were still being used on a voluntary basis.

The Biofuels Act of 2006 became a law only on July this year, and its implementing rules and regulations have yet to be finalized.

With the law expected to be implemented starting next month, however, he said domestic oil consumption should shrink even further.

Under the Biofuels Act, all diesel fuel vehicles should use at least 1 percent biodiesel blend within three months of the effectivity of the law. Gasoline should likewise have a 5% gasoline-ethanol blend within two years of the law's effectivity.

The mandated blend will rise to 2 percent for biodiesel after two years, and to at least 10 percent for bio-ethanol after four years.

In the meantime, Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. last year processed 77.36 million barrels of crude, a 2.6 percent drop from the 2005 volume of 79.26 million barrels.

The drop in processed crude volume was caused by the shutdown of several process units mainly for maintenance.

China Bank cuts home loan rate to 7.5% a year

CHINA BANK HAS reduced its housing loan rate, under its HomeFlex Loan program, to 7.5 percent from the previous rate of 8 percent.

"We see our home loan rate as our chance to have lower monthly amortization," said Arnold de L. Leo, head senior vice president for consumer banking.

At 7.5 percent per year for the first year, the monthly amortization for a 15-mil. loan translates to a monthly payment of 15 years a only 99,071.

The bank first dropped its rates to 9.75 per year in April 2006. The rate further reduced to 9 percent by the end of 2006.

China Bank HomeFlex Loan covers the purchase of a lot, a house and lot, a townhouse, or a condominium unit. It is also available for home construction, renovation or refinancing an existing loan with another bank, also of those by the bank's Serve Thru Chinabank AutoPlus loan, a loan package for the purchase of brand new or second-hand vehicles.

Investment Funds of Valuable Life Insurance Company	Valuation Date: 03/31/07	Valuation Date: 04/06/07
PESO Dollar Bond Fund	1.4179	1.4192
PESO Global Bond Fund	1.1861	1.1886
PESO Peso Fixed Income Fund	0.9837	0.9900
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Cost control doesn't always have to mean cost cutting. By learning to look at your operations closely, you might be surprised to find that some costs can be taken out without you feeling the pain. Find out how the cost control process of the world's best run companies can be applied to your everyday business operations.

Rico Sun, May 3 (9am - 5pm)

STARTING AND GROWING YOUR BUSINESS

Developing a Winning Business Plan to Start Your Business
Learn the structured approach to developing a business through the proper development of a business plan. You'll learn to put your business ideas into a workable plan, identify your competitors and even open your management team will assist if you want your business to take off and prosper.

Jer Valencia, April 20 (9am - 5pm)

High Impact Marketing on a Shoestring Budget
Still even the world's largest companies looking for ways to squeeze more out of marketing budgets, what can an entrepreneur in a developing country do? Get practical and very applicable techniques that you can use to get better results from your marketing efforts, especially when you have a limited marketing budget.

Jun Rocky Chua Ah, May 11 (9am - 5pm)

How to Manage HR for Growing Companies
Increasing productivity, motivating employees, managing morale, developing job descriptions and measurables. These are growing pains faced by SMEs. Take the pain out of labor. If you have 50 employees or less, find out how you can save the pain and professionalize your HR systems and policies without having to hire a whole HR department!

Anna Maria P. Santiago, April 30 (9am - 5pm)

Learn Processes to Manage Your Operations More Efficiently
Do you want a smoother running operation? Reduce costs and maximize profits? Learn how to apply standard and inventory management principles to reduce cost of goods without sacrificing quality and customer service. Improve order fulfillment levels and lower costs.

Elvira Vasallanas, May 3 & 4 (9am - 1pm)

Hi-Tech vs. Right Tech?
In a world of dazzling and glittery high technology, even entrepreneurs need to spend time on engineering high technology that they end up not using because it's too hard to run or maintain. Learn how to apply the principles of appropriate technology to select from the dizzying array of technology and hardware. You, be spared the time wasting by business, not worrying about the computers and the programs he needs to use.

Jayette Ojeda, May 11 (9am - 5pm)

MANAGING THE FAMILY BUSINESS
Presented by the Family Business Development Center

Professionals or Progeny: Who Should Run the Family Business
In a family business, no matter who's open, the family will have their say. Learn how to decide when it comes to your family business! Strategic planning advice for your business from the course, coupled with real-life lessons in family business management, allows you to step back and see your best to balance the needs of your business along with the needs of your family members.

Ricky Mercado, May 17 (9am - 5pm)

Succeeding at Succession in the Family Business
Close to half of all family businesses fail when the baton of the family fails to develop a suitable successor. This fail-proof film helps and ensure that the family business grows for generations to come. Learn the problems of succession and how to prepare for it. Be told and be aware, before you plan and prepare for succession in a rational but reliable manner.

Ricky Mercado and Tony Dalton, May 18 (9am - 5pm)

Family Feuds and Business Battles: How to Resolve Internal Conflicts
Fight competition instead of one another! It's difficult enough to cope with emotional family issues, but when you add business issues to the mix, it's a recipe for disaster. Here are long-term strategies to manage family conflict so that you can use your energies to focus on waging war in the marketplace rather than at home.

Manuel Gaa, May 24 (9am - 5pm)

What is the Secret Weapon of the Successful Family Business?
You can have one for your own! A shared look at the latest on family businesses shows that they often have a secret weapon, and that's trusted to vary around the world. Generations of family businesses have used it to survive and prosper in the face of wars, depressions, and even their own worst enemies. It's no secret anymore. It's out and you, as a family business owner, will benefit from its use if to your family's advantage as well. Learn how to make and use a family constitution to protect your business and your family.

Tony Dalton, May 25 (9am - 5pm)

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At least 6 more firms holding IPOs this year

Low inflation and interest rates help sustain a vibrant market

By Elizabeth Sanchez Lacson

INVESTMENT HOUSE SOCCSKSARGEN Inc. & Investment Corp. said at least six more companies would hold initial public offerings this year.

SOCCSKSARGEN is a subsidiary of Banco de Oro Universal Bank (BDO). It will be involved in the IPO of three firms as underwriter.

Edmundo Francisco, SOCCSKSARGEN president, said the six companies scheduled to hold IPOs after their offerings include Cebu Sports Complex Inc. last week were; National Reinsurance Corp. of the Philippines (PHILNARE); Davao-based oil firm Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.; high-rise housing developer Anchor Land Holdings Inc.; Goldstar Inches, the master franchise holder of fast-food giant McDonald's in the Philippines; a power company; and a business process outsourcing firm with Japanese clients.

Last year, BDO Capital raised P1.35 billion in both equity and debt for the private sector.

BDO Capital was involved in the following stock deals last year: the IPOs of First Gen Corp. and PHOC Energy Development Corp., and the follow-on offering of Megaworld Corp.

"The market is vibrant as good issues are coming out on board as investors can have choices [choices]," Francisco said.

PSE president Francis Lim earlier said that the low inflation and interest rate regime had helped sustain a vibrant (00) market.

In a related development, BDO Capital said it had set Philhealth's IPO at P3.80 a share, which would raise for the company about P2.4 billion, its offer period starts today.

At P3.80, PhilHealth will have a market capitalization of P7.62 million, set for June to Asian countries parts in Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

Philhealth net income is expected to grow to P627 million this year from P536 million in 2006 as gross premiums are seen to increase to P1.2 billion in 2007, from P1.06 billion in 2006. Philhealth is offering 608 million shares.

Eastern Petroleum forms new firm

By Abigail L. Ho

EASTERN PETROLEUM CORP. is setting an initial P100 million into a new subsidiary that will focus solely on alternative fuel projects, particularly ethanol.

In an interview with the Inquirer, Eastern chair and chief executive Fernando Martinez said the new company, Eastern Renewables Corp., would be registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission within the week.

As early as now, however, Martinez said Eastern was already in talks with a Chinese firm for a possible joint venture arrangement.

"We already have a draft agreement with the Chinese firm. They're just waiting for me to sign it. The shareholder also is ready, planning by next month," he said.

Unlike other planned ethanol facilities in the country, he said the ethanol plant that the new company would put up would not source its feedstock from sugarcane.

"We want to encourage the planting of sources because our million hectares of the crop can yield over 3 billion liters of ethanol, or around 10 percent of the country's yearly consumption," he said.

For these nonsugarcane, he said the company could tap some of the more than 3 million hectares of idle land scattered across the country.

The Department of Agriculture, through Secretary Arthur Yap, had already committed to provide aid in securing land for the plantations, as well as in securing financing schemes in various farmers.

He said Eastern was eyeing an initial 10,000 hectares of land located in various parts of Mindanao, including Misamis de Oro, Misamis Oriental, Bukidnon, General Santos, Sarangani and Davao.

Initially, the company to be harnessed from these plantations would be shipped to China for processing, he said.

Shipments should start by December, he added.

"We'll start a feasibility study on the project as soon as we sign an agreement [with the Chinese firm]. When the company becomes more established and we're already producing [assets in commercial quantities], or about 100,000 metric tons, we can already put up an ethanol plant here," he said.

He said the plant should already be established within the next two years.

The entire project would entail at least P200 million in investments, he said, with Eastern having a 60 percent stake in it and the Chinese company a 40 percent share.

Sun Life's Q1 mutual fund sales up by 234%

By Dimitri L. Lucas

THE LOCAL UNIT OF CANADIAN insurer Sun Life Financial reported a sharp rise in its mutual fund sales for the first quarter of the year despite the less-than-ideal trading conditions in the stock market.

Sun Life Financial Philippines said its mutual fund sales from January to March of 2007 hit P1.6 billion, up 234 percent from year-ago level.

Its sales performance in the first quarter of this year is equal to 60 percent of its total sales in 2006, it added.

"For the same period, Sun Life's assets under management totaled P1.43 billion, 126 percent higher than it was at the end of 2006," the company said in a statement.

Sun Life president and CEO Remy Joseph Reyners said sales were aided by the good showing of the country's bond markets, especially during last year's stock market bull run.

The company said it was now aiming at gaining the lead in the country's nascent mutual fund market in terms of sales.

"After ranking second among all mutual fund companies in terms of gross sales, we have our eyes firmly on our vision to becoming the number one asset management company in the country," Reyners said.

Sun Life's most popular fund, the Prosperity Balanced Fund, generated a year-on-year return of 24.12 percent as of March 31.

Prosperity Bond Fund and the Prosperity Philippine Equity Fund registered year-on-year returns of 7.67 percent and 46.83 percent, respectively.

Sun Life's Dollar Advantage Fund enjoyed a year-on-year yield of 9.17 percent.

Reyners said the increased sales reflect the trust and confidence of investors in the firm.

"We take pains to ensure that we maintain this trust," he said. "For this reason, our investment specialists and licensed mutual fund representatives on how they are professional, ethical and assist their clients in guiding their investment needs."

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RP SMEs least competitive in Asia-Pacific, poll shows

UPS survey says Filipinos see bright prospects ahead

By Bernel W. Dormiga

THE PHILIPPINE SMALL AND MEDIUM ENterprises still believe that they are less competitive in the Asia-Pacific region for the third straight year, according to the 2007 UPS Asia Business Monitor.

Logistics service firm UPS' fourth survey, which was started in 2004, is Asia's first comprehensive study into SME competitiveness, a report on the results said.

The latest poll covered 1,000 SME leaders between Nov. 11, 2006 and Jan. 10, 2007, including 150 executive Philippines.

Other respondents are based in 11 countries and territories—Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Brunei, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

Of local respondents, 58 percent expressed lack of confidence in Philippine SMEs' competitiveness despite positive growth in SME sentiments in other countries. This represented the worst perception for SMEs in the entire region.

Also, local respondents were the least objectified about the growth of their companies with 26 percent following us.

Last year, only 13 percent thought so. The lowest that year. In the initial study of 2005, 19 percent said the Philippines would grow, the lowest that year.

Still, Filipinos were again the most most confident that their companies would have better or the same prospects over the next 12 months. The Filipinos polled in at 60 percent, after the Indians, 89 percent and the Chinese, 79 percent.

Filipinos said the three sectors of information technology, manufacturing and agriculture, forestry and fisheries, were the most promising in terms of growth this year.

Among local SMEs, 49 percent said they would increase their workforce this year; 45 percent said they would keep their size; and 6 percent said they would let go of workers.

Regarding factors that contribute to broader SME growth, government support was found to be the most lacking in the Philippines, followed by access to funding and working capital. Respectively, about 99 percent and almost 80 percent of those polled said so.

Some 96 percent of local respondents said they believed transportation infrastructure contributed to the growth of their businesses, but about 70 percent said these were lacking.

Despite these, the study showed that Philippine SMEs—along with their counterparts in India—have the best access to qualified workforce, which was found lacking in the other 10 economies.

Asked what business issue kept them up at night, UPS presidents of local respondents said it was financial performance, 34 percent cited customer loyalty, and 31 percent pointed to speed, flexibility and adaptability to change.

MONEY LESSONS FOR TOTS
Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. (center) shakes the hand of Education Secretary Jesli Lapus after the two signed an agreement to incorporate into the elementary curriculum lessons in money management. The school effort is expected to encourage elementary students to become net savers. Looking on is Cinthia Makino, head of the Economic Policy Reform and Advocacy Group, which is assisting the effort.

Thrift banks' exposure to property sector up by 26% to P76B in 2006

THRIFT BANKS' EXPOSURE to the real estate sector, in the form of loans and investments, continued its rising trend, as the loss interest rate environment continued to encourage purchases of real properties.

The thrift banking industry's investment and loan exposure to the real estate sector grew by 26 percent to P76.06 billion as of end-December 2006 from a year ago, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported.

Compared with the end-September 2006 level of P76.6 billion, the end-December figure on real estate exposure represented a 7.7-percent growth.

Banking practitioners said the decline in interest rates has encouraged individuals and corporate entities alike to buy pieces of real estate for personal use and business expansion, respectively.

Companies that have resorted to the subdivision for the appropriate time to expand has begun processing their plan to take advantage of the record-low interest rates, the industry players added.

"The industry was able to sustain an expected P-P21.1 real estate loans but 21 consecutive quarters now," the BSP said in a statement.

BSP data showed that of the P76.06 billion worth of exposure of thrift banks to the real estate sector, the bulk of P75.48 billion was accounted for by loans, while the remaining P582 million was the banks' investments in corporate papers and equities sold by real estate firms.

The BSP said real estate loans were concentrated on financing purchases of residential properties of borrowers. The central bank added that it is easing the acquisition of real estate properties assigned (REPA) to banks by borrowers with payment problems.

At the same time, officials of Switzerland-based Swiss Reinsurance Co. urged Philippine firms in the food industry to make a closer look at its packaging process as they said consumer concerns could be linked to destructive carbon dioxide emissions.

"What we want to do is to share the assessment of issues that we see in [conflict]," Swiss Re's South and Southeast Asian environmental director Jerry Jacop Singh said in an interview.

In a presentation to the media, the official pointed out that Swiss Re's paper-based food packaging products are less harmful to the environment compared to other forms that dominate the Philippine market, like the so-called duplex packs which are used mostly to package fruit juice.

He said that choosing the right kind of packaging is especially critical for developing countries like the Philippines, where up to 80 percent of all garbage is made up of packaging waste.

The company's campaign is extraordinarily a call for greater environmental awareness and a push for its products' line, which is marketed by trade local packaging modes like aluminum cans, glass and plastic bottles, among others.

"Our packaging is 100 percent recyclable," Singhvi said explaining that Swiss Re's product is composed of 74 percent paper, with the balance being made up of aluminum foil and a thin plastic coating to help keep the food content fresh.

Officials hope that, in launching a campaign to inform Filipinos about the recycling value of Swiss Re's containers, they would be generating awareness among consumers and recycling firms that they can earn from used Swiss Re's cartons, while increasing the company's presence in the local market.

Singh said that the company has already committed to buy used Swiss Re's cartons from several Metro Manila junkshop dealers at P5.4 kilo for recycling into various raw materials.

The official hopes that the scheme would raise Swiss Re's earnings in the level of bottles and cuts cans in terms of recycling value.

Go green, Tetra Pak urges consumers

By Dante L. Lucas

A LARGE MULTINATIONAL food packaging firm has urged local consumers to be more conscious about conserving trees, environmental damage by choosing products that minimize packaging waste.

At the same time, officials of Switzerland-based Swiss Reinsurance Co. urged Philippine firms in the food industry to make a closer look at its packaging process as they said consumer concerns could be linked to destructive carbon dioxide emissions.

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He said that choosing the right kind of packaging is especially critical for developing countries like the Philippines, where up to 80 percent of all garbage is made up of packaging waste.

The company's campaign is extraordinarily a call for greater environmental awareness and a push for its products' line, which is marketed by trade local packaging modes like aluminum cans, glass and plastic bottles, among others.

"Our packaging is 100 percent recyclable," Singhvi said explaining that Swiss Re's product is composed of 74 percent paper, with the balance being made up of aluminum foil and a thin plastic coating to help keep the food content fresh.

Officials hope that, in launching a campaign to inform Filipinos about the recycling value of Swiss Re's containers, they would be generating awareness among consumers and recycling firms that they can earn from used Swiss Re's cartons, while increasing the company's presence in the local market.

Singh said that the company has already committed to buy used Swiss Re's cartons from several Metro Manila junkshop dealers at P5.4 kilo for recycling into various raw materials.

The official hopes that the scheme would raise Swiss Re's earnings in the level of bottles and cuts cans in terms of recycling value.

Manila, Moscow out to boost trade

RUSSIAN OFFICIALS are looking at this year's visit of Philippine top executives to boost the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and its Russian counterparts as part of promoting investment and tourism.

According to the PCCI, an officials said with newly appointed Philippine envoy Virgilio T. Sanchez to discuss economic between the Philippines and Russia.

PCCI president Susan Ople said: One of her was to four with his group's goal of working closely with foreign councils and missions to bring about a healthier economic climate in the country.

"PCCI actively encourages the promotion of Philippine products in Russia, such as electronic products, agricultural products, among many others," Ople said. "The potential of doing business with Russia is huge, and it is simply waiting to be properly tapped and explored."

Ople said that while Russia was a leader in oil and gas exports and a top seller of timber and metals to other countries, the Philippines has been registering positive to Russia (its consumption commodity), dominated ceramics, bananas, pineapples, coconut oil and banana chips.

Currently, shipments to Russia account for 0.05 percent of the country's total exports, which last year reached $46.96 billion.

In 2006, the Russian Federation ranked as the 29th largest trading partner of the Philippines, contributing 0.22 percent to the Philippines' $90.11 billion worth of trade with the rest of the world.

The Russian Federation offer a market of 142.4 million people, according to 2006 estimates.

Bernel W. Dormiga

NOTICE OF REGULAR ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the regular annual stockholders' meeting of CEBU PROPERTY VENTURES AND DEVELOPMENT CORP. will be held at the City Sports Club Cebu, Cebu City on MONDAY, 23 APRIL 2007 at 3:00 P.M. with the following:

AGENDA

1. Determination of Quorum
2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
3. Annual Report of Officers
4. New Business:
   4.1 Ratification of all Acts and Resolutions of the Board of Directors and Management adopted in the ordinary course of business during the preceding year
5. Election of Directors including the Independent Directors
6. Election of Auditors and Fixing their Remuneration
7. Consideration of such other business as may properly come before the meeting
8. Adjournment

Stockholders of record as of 12 March 2007 shall be the stockholders entitled to vote at this meeting. As per By-Laws, the Stock and Transfer Books of the Corporation will be closed from 13 to 19 March 2007, inclusive.

Makati City, 23 February 2007

FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RENATO OMBRAJAN
Corporate Secretary

CEBU HOLDINGS INC.

NOTICE OF REGULAR ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the regular annual stockholders' meeting of CEBU HOLDINGS, INC. will be held at the City Sports Club Cebu, Cebu City on MONDAY, 23 APRIL 2007 at 10:00 A.M. with the following:

AGENDA

1. Determination of Quorum
2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
3. Annual Report of Officers
4. New Business:
   4.1 Ratification of all Acts and Resolutions of the Board of Directors and Management adopted in the ordinary course of business during the preceding year
5. Election of Directors including the Independent Directors
6. Election of Auditors and Fixing their Remuneration
7. Consideration of such other business as may properly come before the meeting
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Makati City, 23 February 2007

FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RENATO OMBRAJAN
Corporate Secretary

With promise of open skies, Palawan City braces for more tourists

By Robert Regalado
Inquirer Southern Luzon

PUERTO PRINCESA—THE AIRPORT here is anticipating an influx of tourists from nearby countries after members of the Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines East Asia Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) opened their skies for sub-regional flights.

"The granting of the Fifth Freedom Traffic Rights to carriers operating in the member countries is one of the breakthroughs in a two-day meeting here," said Atty. Eliot Guan, Brunei delegation head and chair of the Transport Infrastructure and ICT Development Cluster of BIMP-EAGA.

The Fifth Freedom Traffic Rights allows airlines to fly another route other than their designated air hubs without legal complications, he said in a press conference last April 13.

With this policy, airlines need not incur losses by sticking to their designated routes, Ing explained.

"The open skies policy will open the BIMP-EAGA to (several) airlines that will boost travel and trade," Ing said.

The member countries also agreed to lower the landing fees and tariffs.

The airports in Puerto Princesa and Tawitawi Basilan in Mindanao are the designated points for the Philippines.

The BIMP-EAGA was established in 1994 as Asia's largest sub-regional cooperation group.

Banks' nonperforming loan ratio dropped to 5.56% in Feb

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE NONPERFORMING LOANS (NPL) ratio of universal and commercial banks dropped to 5.56 percent last February from 8.02 percent in the same month a year ago, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported.

The NPL ratio is a measure of exposure of banks to bad debts. It is measured by dividing unpaid loans in the universal and commercial banking sector's total loan portfolio.

The drop in the NPL ratio, therefore, means that growth in total loan portfolio outpaced growth in bad debts, or that the decline in unpaid loans is faster than the decline in total outstanding loans.

Total loan portfolio stood at P1.499 trillion last February from P1.512 trillion in the same month last year. NPLs dropped to P134.97 billion from P153.46 billion.

But if assessed on a month-on-month basis, the NPL ratio in February was slightly higher than the 5.50 percent recorded the previous month.

Restructured loans fell P79.5 billion in February, dropping from P89.22 billion in the same month a year ago, and slightly declining from the P79.65 billion last January.

This resulted in a 3.82-percent ratio of restructured loans over total loans portfolio—lower than the 5.36 percent recorded in the same period last year, but worse than the 3.79 percent recorded the previous month.

The government, spearheaded by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, in the past few years moved to help the country's banking sector recover from huge bad debts stashed by double-digit NPL ratios.

Measures including the granting of tax discounts on transactions involving the sale of bad debts to special purpose vehicles (SPVs) were implemented to help banks easily dispose of their bad assets.

The expansion of the banking sector to bad debts was partly blamed for the Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s that affected Southeast Asian countries, including the Philippines.

Lessons from the crisis led monetary authorities from different countries in the region to implement banking regulation reforms.

Surplus in 2006 CPSF not remote, says DOF

Gov't hopeful of other developments in fiscal front

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE SALE OF THE GOVERNMENT SHARE of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) in local and foreign power firm Aboitiz Power Corp. (AboitizPower) will boost the country's chances of registering a surplus in the public sector's budget position for 2006—something the Philippines has not seen in a decade.

The last time the country recorded a surplus in the consolidated public sector fiscal position (CPSF) was in 1996, prior to the financial crisis that struck Southeast Asia in 1997.

DOF is the combined budget deficit and surpluses of the national government, local government units, government-owned and -controlled corporations, government financial institutions (GFIs) and social security institutions (SSIs) like the GSIS.

It is one of the economic indicators used by credit rating agencies in assessing the credit-worthiness of a country.

The CPSF for 2006 was earlier projected to hit P43.4 billion in 2006, a drop of 55 percent from the P97.5 billion posted the previous year.

But the DOF has expressed confidence that the actual figure maybe even better than the earlier forecast, and that the country may attain a surplus in the CPSF for the first time in ten years.

Finance undersecretary Gil Beltran said that because of improved revenue collection of the national government and better financial performance of state-owned firms, the country could have either posted a very small deficit or attained a small surplus in 2006.

Beltran said that the huge gain generated by the GSIS from the sale of its BSC shares could help further improve the CPSF in 2006.

The Department of Finance and government-owned and controlled corporations have been encouraged to engage in income-generating activities so they would become less dependent on the national government for finances.

These activities, the DOF added, would also improve the consolidated public sector fiscal position.

"The surpluses of GSIs will increase, and therefore result in a better CPSF," Finance Undersecretary Gil Beltran said explained. "We can either achieve a very low deficit or a slight surplus in the CPSF for 2006."

Earlier, the DOF urged the GSIS and the Social Security System to sell their shares jointly with that of the national government. The DOF believed that a joint sale would result in a better price for the shares.

GSIS sold its 189.31 million BSC shares for P71.30/ share, which it claimed was above-market price.

Also, the sale of the BSC shares is expected to benefit the national government, which receives dividends from state-owned firms. GOCCs, GFIs and SSIs—except those that had just negative retained earnings—are mandated by law to remit annual dividends to the national government.

Last Friday, GSIS announced that it had made a 6-percent stake in SMC for P5.6 billion after bidding on it the week before those shares.

The pension fund said it earned P5.7 billion in net profits from the sale of SMC shares.

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DA allots funds to ease hunger, generate jobs

By Aries R. Rufino

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULture will be channeling funds to programs that are designed to create more jobs, generate more investments for the sector, lower living costs and mitigate hunger.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap addressed the graduates of Central Luzon State University, explaining to them the department's four-point program that are meant to increase the earnings of small farmers and fisherfolk.

"One thing I have come to realize is that Philippine agriculture's future growth and expansion is dependent on farm profitable one. Yap said during the CLSU's 85th annual commencement exercises held in Muñoz, Nueva Ecija.

On that day, the university also conferred to Yap the degree of doctor of humanities, honoris causa.

The five-point program focuses on twelve areas, with infrastructure, post-harvest and storage facilities, credit, financial institutions support, and research, development, rural extension work and training.

One DA initiative will involve the expansion of multi-million parks with solid storage and direct links to rural markets, which could create close to 200,000 new jobs and raise fish-ries production to 4.7 million metric tons in 2007.

Another initiative is the implementation of a nationwide rehabilitation program, where farmers will learn how to diversify and reap other uses for this versatile farm product through intercropping, livestock dispersal, as well as production of cocoa-coir and vermicompost.

CLSU president Rodolfo Undan cited the agriculture chief's efforts in the field of public service, and pointed out Yap's "total commitment, deep concern and advocacy for the promotion of an equitable program for food security and reduction of poverty."

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Farm ...

From page B1

countries that require external assistance in food self-sufficiency and food security problems.

In the meantime, the corn program would be completely integrated with the livestock commodity program to enhance the stability of yellow corn supply to these industries.

Between-said three initiatives, which would benefit consumers through cheaper but quality food items, would be complemented by programs to improve logistics support to agricultural producers, such as the establishment of more Bagsakan Centers, Barangay Food Terminals, cooperative meat shops and a national cold chain system.

To further mitigate the effects of the series of major typhoons on agricultural production, the department has also initiated both short and long-term measures not only to rehabilitate damaged infrastructure but also to significantly reduce the problem of hunger.

The DA plans to set up a P500-million "food highway" that would link farm production areas to major consumption centers, as well as calamity- and evacuation-prone areas.

Dennis said the food highway would be set up by the National Food Authority and would consist of intermodal post-harvest facilities and marketing support systems to be established in strategic areas to facilitate the smooth

The food highway aims to reduce crop wastages and losses and expand the scope of small farmers and fisherfolk's main markets.

The department has also placed an array of initiatives to guarantee the stability of food supplies for the entire year.

These measures include putting farther funds into rural infrastructure such as irrigation and post-harvest facilities; expanding production areas, particularly in less disaster-prone areas; sourcing basic food supplies to countries prone to grains; and extending support to farmers and fisherfolk to help restore their access to markets.

Five new branches
Plantersbank widens its reach to more small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
From the investment haven of Mindanao to the Queen City of the South, all the way to the country cities of Metropolitan Manila, Plantersbank spreads its full support to entrepreneurs by continuously providing SME-friendly financial services for their business and personal needs.
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Alice Arlos Espinosa

Lipid modifying effects of drug discovered

CLEARWATER, A DRUG POPULARITY KNOWN for its antiplatelet effect preventing the formation of blood clots in the body's blood vessels, has also been shown to have favorable effects on the body's lipid or cholesterol profile, particularly the high density lipoprotein (HDL) and triglycerides.

HDL is also known as the good type of cholesterol, while triglycerides are a type of fat which when increased can also be associated with increased risk of heart attack and stroke.

Results of the study published in the Journal Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis and Vascular Biology showed that 12 weeks of therapy with clearwater 300 mg increased the level of HDL-lowering lipoprotein. Furthermore, triglyceride level was decreased by 21 percent. Levels of the bad fats, low density lipoprotein and lipoprotein b, were unaffected.

The triglyceride-lowering effect of clearwater is believed to have significant effect in the treatment of heart disease, particularly in diabetics who are prone to have elevated triglycerides. Diabetes, by itself, is now considered a heart disease equivalent.

The results of the study are also significant because they may help in understanding recent aggressive cholesterol-lowering and risk-factor modification in individuals with known coronary heart disease and other diseases of the blood vessels.

Aside from improving the lipid profile of patients, earlier studies showed that clearwater has also been proven to be effective in peripheral arterial disease (PAD), a disease which includes the narrowing in the lower extremities. Intermittent claudication is the most common symptom of PAD and is usually felt as pain in the muscles of the legs and thighs when walking, and relieved with rest. It may also be felt as fatigue, numbness, or a cramping sensation of the legs after walking a certain distance. In severe PAD can lead to gangrene and the need to amputate the affected extremity.

In the United States, eight trials were done to test the efficacy of clinically proven platelet in the treatment of intermittent claudication. In these trials, patients were either given clearwater 50mg 2 tabs bid/day, 100mg bid/day or placebo for 12 to 24+ months. Treadmill tests were done to determine improvement in walking distance.

Results showed that those taking clearwater experienced an improvement in maximal walking distance compared to those given placebo or dummy pills. The maximal walking distance of clearwater patients improved by 44 to 50 percent compared to the 21 percent improvement achieved by patients taking placebo. Furthermore, changes in pain-free walking distance showed a similar pattern to maximal walking distance and were significantly improved for clearwater.

Many clinicians believe that clearwater's lipid-modifying effect combined with its improvement of intermittent claudication are important reasons to consider clearwater as the preferred drug for the management of PAD. Patients are cautioned however, that clearwater is a prescription medicine and should only be used upon their doctor's recommendation.

TeleTech launches MBA program with academic institutions

TELETECH, A GLOBAL LEADER IN BUSINESS process outsourcing, has launched a master in business administration (MBA) scholarship program aimed at upgrading the managerial skills of its employees in the Philippines.

TeleTech presented its first batch of scholars with the Ateneo de Manila University Graduate School of Business at Rockwell, Makati City.

TeleTech vice president and general manager, Rhodin Porath, presented the certificate to the Graduate School Dean Alfredo Pascual during simple ceremonies at the Rockwell Club.

TeleTech has also partnered with the University of St. La Salle in Bacolod City for this MBA program. The MBA scholarship program, called "TeleTRAIN" is the very first by a BPO company in the country. Under this program, TeleTech encourages not to abandon their classes and studies in the middle of the term. The TeleTech MBA scholarship program covers the total cost of the course. Qualified TeleTech scholars can avail themselves of as much as P350,000 worth of scholarship. Fourth levelers have received an MBA degree from the exclusive Thunderbird - The American School of International Management in Arizona.

Doc to Harvard Medical School

PAOLO ANTONIO SANCHEZ GIL, 26, MD, DPBO, was recently accepted to a full clinical fellowship at the prestigious Berthiaume Eye Institute, Joslin Diabetes Center at the Harvard Medical School in Boston, Massachusetts. His area of interest lies specifically in vitreoretinal VISUAL eye diseases.

Sanchez is a BS Pharmacy graduate, Cum Laude, of the University of the Philippines Manila. He went on to take his medical education at the UP College of Medicine and placed second in the graduating batch, class of 2002. He placed sixth at the August 2002 Medical Board Examinations, and placed first in both the said and written portions of the recent Philippine Board of Ophthalmology Diplomate Examination.

Sanchez's parents hail from Iligan City, Batangas and Angeles City, Pampanga.

Team Manila only at Rockwell's Power Plant Mall

CUTTING-EDGE DESIGN, THE LATEST fad, style that's all the rage: these distinguish the Rockwell Center's Power Plant Mall from other shopping malls.

And it's only here that the hip can find the works of Team Manila, an award-winning graphic design studio which has become a trailsetter in cool visual culture. Drawing inspiration from the city's street lifestyles, Team Manila's creations include limited-edition shirts, totes, pouches and zip bags with unique and eye-catching designs.

Anywhere, road signs and city landmarks find their way into Team Manila's distinctive designs. With the aesthetic driven by the studio's pride in global feel to local subjects, transforming the mundane and familiar into something chic and sensational.

Team Manila chose Rockwell Center as their sole location of its first standing store, knowing that trend setters flock to the Power Plant Mall. So if you want to stand out from the crowd with a unique get up, visit Team Manila now at their temporary space at Power Plant Mall (B-1 level beside Toks).

Watch out for the grand opening of Archeology at the mall's B-1 level, where Team Manila will be moving. The thrill of discovery awaits you only at Power Plant Mall's Archeology!

LOOKMANILA find their way into Team Manila's distinctive design

PHILIPPINES' FINEST SOLDIERS HONORED AT MALACAÑANG

Some of the most exemplary soldiers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines were recently honored by The Outstanding Makati Men's (TOMM) and 2007 The Search for The Outstanding Philippine Soldiers recognizes the most outstanding of the Philippine soldiers, their contributions to society, and their efforts to ensure national security. The TOPS Awardees of 2006 are (back row) Lt. Col. Carlito Galvez Jr., Staff Sgt. Blas Fernandez, Staff Sgt. Rodolfo Tagris, Navy Capt. Antonio Millan, Technical Sgt. Angelo Ortiz, Sonnier Air Force Hospital Corpsman Romeo Cadiao, Lt. Col. Rolando Asuncion, Master Sgt. Normelito Ignes, Technical Sgt. Julius Bilinio and Col. Corazon Pagunsan.

MANSMITH AND FIELDERS INC FETES YMHA AWARDEES

From a night filled with fun, music, and splendor recognition for some of the country's most distinguished men the Outstanding Makatizens Awards (TOMAC) night was held recently at the Manila Hotel in Makati City recently. The spotlight was focused on seven outstanding individuals who were recognized for their respective contributions to the metropolitan they work for. Mansmith and Fielders Inc is the organization behind the TOMAC initiative that aims to encourage and motivate the Makatizens in marketing and entrepreneurship and thus provide inspiration to other young marketing professionals. Mansmith and Fielders Inc is considered the country's leading group for providing marketing and business consultancy services. Shown are the 2006 Outstanding Makati Men (from row from left) Sandico Andaluz-Ang (Sandico Securities Inc), Jose Rizalde (Rizalde Communications), Rhonelle Antonio de Jesus (Sonnier Communications), Donald Sonnier (Sonnier), Bing Tanseco (Lamudyan Corp), Carlos Chavez (Manila MM Corp) and Aurora Marquez-Suarez (Summit Media). With their artistic heads are the board of judges and the founders (from left) Jaime Ascaa (CEO, French Baker), Chiqui Hizon (ex-VP MMA) co-founder and president, Mansmith and Fielders), Joseph Uy (VP MMA founder and chair of Mansmith and Fielders), Ann Dingdiwan (president, IDS Philippines) and Dr. Raul Fabella (marketing research guru).

HP Entertainment Notebook: Innovation with a twist

BE THE MULTI-TASKING, SOUND SLEEK MOVE sophisticated twist in its innovative PC line with the launch of the new HP Pavilion tx1000 Entertainment PC. This is HP's first-ever consumer notebook to feature a dynamic "tear and touch" screen display, and other innovative features to deliver the best Microsoft Windows Vista experience.

Designed by HP's award-winning notebook design team, the HP Pavilion tx1000 Entertainment Notebook PC is built to be a multi-talented device, versatile, and fashionable. It delivers a dynamic and personal mobile computing experience for trendy students seeking a powerful PC with entertainment capabilities to keep up with their day to day activities. At the same time, it suits active professionals who want a sleek, versatile notebook to balance both personal and work projects.

Versatile in function

The unique 12.1-inch wide "tear and touch" screen of the HP Pavilion tx1000 Entertainment Notebook PC can be rotated 180 degrees for viewing movies or for ease of brainstorm-or-classroom presentations. Additionally, it can be converted to a flat slate for scribbling notes quickly in classrooms or enjoying movies in tight travel spaces such as airplanes. The multi-gesture integrated Webcam and dual, omni-directional microphones make it easy to communicate with friends, colleagues, or other it is easier to connect with clients, friends and family, or conduct net meeting with business associates or virtual classmates.

Multitasking is made easy thanks to AMD Turion 64 x 2 mobile technology which powers the HP Pavilion tx1000 Entertainment Notebook PC to run programs simultaneously without slowing the PC. Users can switch seamlessly between work and play to run DVDs and music while working on detailed documents or spreadsheets. AMD Turion 64 x 2 mobile technology also increases battery life for the freedom to work or play for longer on the go.

Users need not worry about forgetting their passwords with an integrated fingerprint reader that allows users to log on to their notebook PC with a simple swipe of the finger. Even with multiple users of the notebook PC, individual fingerprints can be assigned to create accounts and private files.

Entertainment driven

Built for easy entertainment, the HP Pavilion tx1000 Entertainment Notebook PC features new and improved HP QuickPlay 2.0, an HP innovation that allows users to launch music, photos and video files at the push of a button without booting up their notebooks. Movies, game graphics and photographs appear realistic and visually stunning through its high definition display with HP BrightView technology that enhances the visual quality for a richer multimedia entertainment experience. A mini remote control allows users to easily control and navigate multimedia features and adjust volume levels.

One of the first PCs to be developed for Microsoft Windows Vista Home Premium edition, the HP Pavilion tx1000 Entertainment Notebook PC has a range of new features for organizing content to allow users to find photographs and other entertainment files quickly and easily.

Fashionable in finish

Following the success of the HP Inspiria design, the HP Pavilion tx1000 Entertainment Notebook PC sports the high gloss, texture and modern curves model. HP Inspiria is a result of HP's research into consumers' personal design preferences, as well as a number of trend sources, ranging from fashion to modern furniture. With imaginative, durable hi-tech wave motif surfaces a garnet of images, such as a Japanese Zen garden, the sensuous waves or sound waves.

The HP Pavilion tx1000 Entertainment Notebook PC price starts from P65,950 and it is available at authorized HP dealers.

HP PAVILION tx1000 Entertainment PC

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And, to hook you on the superior quality of the ColorSphere toner cartridges, HP is offering a 30,000 rebate on the purchase of your next ColorSphere cartridge for select LaserJet models!

But an HP Color LaserJet today and see just how much more brilliant your printouts can be, without sacrificing ease and efficiency. Over 300 million LaserJet owners around the world can't be wrong: when it comes to top of the line quality, HP LaserJet is...

Convergys named to Global Outsourcing 100 list

CONVERGYS CORP A GLOBAL LEADER in customer care, human resources, and billing services, announced that the International Association of Outsourcing Professionals® (IAOP) has named Convergys as one of the world's best outsourcing service providers.

The IAOP named Convergys to its annual annual ranking of the World's Best Outsourcing Service Providers – The Global Outsourcing 100. The list includes the biggest and best companies from around the world that provide the full spectrum of outsourcing services.

"We are honored to be named to the select list of global outsourcing providers," said Steve Dougherty, Convergys' president and chief operating officer. "This distinction is a true reflection of the emphasis we place on providing exceptional solutions for our clients, helping them keep their customer relationships positive and profitable."

The IAOP named Convergys to the Global Outsourcing 100 based in part on the following criteria: The entire Convergys brings to its clients' customer experience; The depth and breadth of Convergys' competencies demonstrated through industry recognition, relevant certifications, and investment in the development of people, process, and technologies; The experience and accomplishments of Convergys' executive leadership team; and An assessment of Convergys' systems that ensure outsourcing success.

The IAOP announced the companies named to the Global Outsourcing 100 at the 2007 Outsourcing World Summit in Las Vegas. The complete list will be published in the special advertising feature produced by IAOP in the April 30, Fortune 500 issue of the magazine.

By applying more than 20 years of operational experience in providing outsourcing, Convergys brings clients and their customers the benefits of a time-tested, award-winning client approach. Convergys' unique

BUSINESS

OVERCOMING BALDNESS

THINK-A-HEAD

No man likes being bald. He may try to ignore it, but deep inside, there's a nagging feeling that his hair been stolen. Why me? Why have I gone bald when my friends haven't? Many were sadly accept looking slides being called "Baldie," feeling out as alternative to the opposite sex and pointing up with the other handicaps, baldness brings – both socially and career wise.

Other men refuse to accept baldness and look for a way out – this is when a wrong decision can lead to an even worse state of frustration and despair. Before you do anything about baldness, read the answers to these most asked questions:

Q. I DON'T LIKE BEING BALD – WHAT CAN I DO?

A. There are basically two ways to go. Some men opt for a surgical hair transplant. Others for the non-surgical alternative. When making the decision there's one essential rule: THINK-A-HEAD! – it's not only the immediate results that are so important, it's what your head is going to look like in a few years.

Q. OK, SO WHAT ABOUT SURGICAL TRANSPLANTS?

A. Some say transplants have come a long way since the early days, others say they haven't come far enough. Basically, the surgical process involves taking donor hair from elsewhere on the recipient's head and transplanting it to the balding areas.

Q. DOES TRANSPLANTED HAIR CONTINUE TO GROW?

A. If the surgery has been performed well, the transplanted hair will continue to grow, as it did before it was moved.

Q. CAN ANY BALD MAN HAVE A TRANSPLANT?

A. It's not really possible for a man with advanced baldness because he simply would not have sufficient donor hair to cover his large bald area. Transplants do not increase the number of hairs on a man's head, it's just a case of redistributing them. Transplants are excellent for filling in smaller areas or adding extra hair to thinning parts where there is not expected to be further hairloss.

Q. ARE THERE ANY PROBLEMS WITH TRANSPLANTS?

A. For men whose baldness will not advance further, there seems little downside to having a transplant.

Q. BUT WHAT HAPPENS IF I CONTINUE TO GO BALD?

A. For those whose hairloss continues to advance, there can be significant problems. While the transplanted hair will carry on growing, its other hair becomes thin; it continues as her progressively goes bald. We can have further transplants, but it's likely donor hair will become insufficient as the donor areas do not re-grow hair. The result might be patches of thicker-growing hair among thinning and sparser hair – and this won't take long to happen. The ensuing odd appearance of the man's head can cause him further embarrassment and stress. Spood of hairloss varies, but for most it takes just a few short years from thinning to full-blown baldness.

If a man suffers from Male Pattern Baldness, which usually strikes when he's in his early twenties or thirties, his hairloss will likely continue until he's bald. This is where the catch-phrase THINK-A-HEAD comes into play. Think, what your head will look like in a few years after surgical transplanting – will you want to go out in public?

Q. I DON'T WANT THAT RISK, SO WHAT'S THE ALTERNATIVE?

A. The non-surgical alternative is TCR or Transdermal Cosmetic Reconstruction. It's a super-fine synthetic skin with hairs sewn to be actually growing from it, which is then bonded to your scalp.

Q. IS TCR FOR ANYONE, NO MATTER HOW BALD HE MIGHT BE?

A. Yes, this advanced system is ideal for any state of hairloss and baldness, even for those with only a small amount of hair at the back and sides – the sort of baldness which is easily not suitable for a transplant.

Q. HOW REAL IS TCR, WILL IT LOOK GENUINE?

A. TCR is real, natural hair, which looks and feels as if it's growing from your scalp. TCR cannot be distinguished from your own hair, even by touching. You are not "wearing" it, it's part of you.

Q. DOES TCR REQUIRE SPECIAL CARE?

A. To keep TCR perfect, you need only visit to the stylist every two or three weeks, just as any man does for the cutting and styling of his hair. As you get older, your TCR can be subtly aged and greyed, just as your full head of hair would have looked had you not lost any.

Q. IT SEEMS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE – WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS?

A. There are no problems. You can do anything with TCR, it's your new full head of hair. It feels totally natural on your head – you're not aware of it. The only times you'll be reminded that you're no longer bald is when you look in the mirror and how others react to you – remember, you're going to look years younger.

Q. IS TCR AVAILABLE IN MANILA?

A. Yes, it's available in Manila at Svensara, the hair replacement specialists.

Q. IS TCR SUITABLE FOR ME?

A. To find out if your scalp condition and skin type are suitable for the TCR procedure, book a no-cost TCR hair-finding consultation by calling 892-4247.

Farm sector seen growing 7-8% in '08

High infra spending to boost production

By Jerry R. Rivera

THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR IS PROJECTED to grow by 4-5 percent this year and by a high of 7-8 percent in 2008 on the back of increased public spending on rural infrastructure, seed technology and other productivity programs, said the Department of Agriculture.

Last year, the sector managed to grow by 1.89 percent despite the spate of super typhoons that ravaged the country between September and December, which adversely affected its reproduction.

"Relative growth, this rate will be significant difficult to outrun worse, particularly in palay, this year's massive public investments in the farm sector are expected to bear fruit in early to mid-year when the productivity-enhancement support systems invested in place," said Agriculture Undersecretary Segfredo Serrano in a statement.

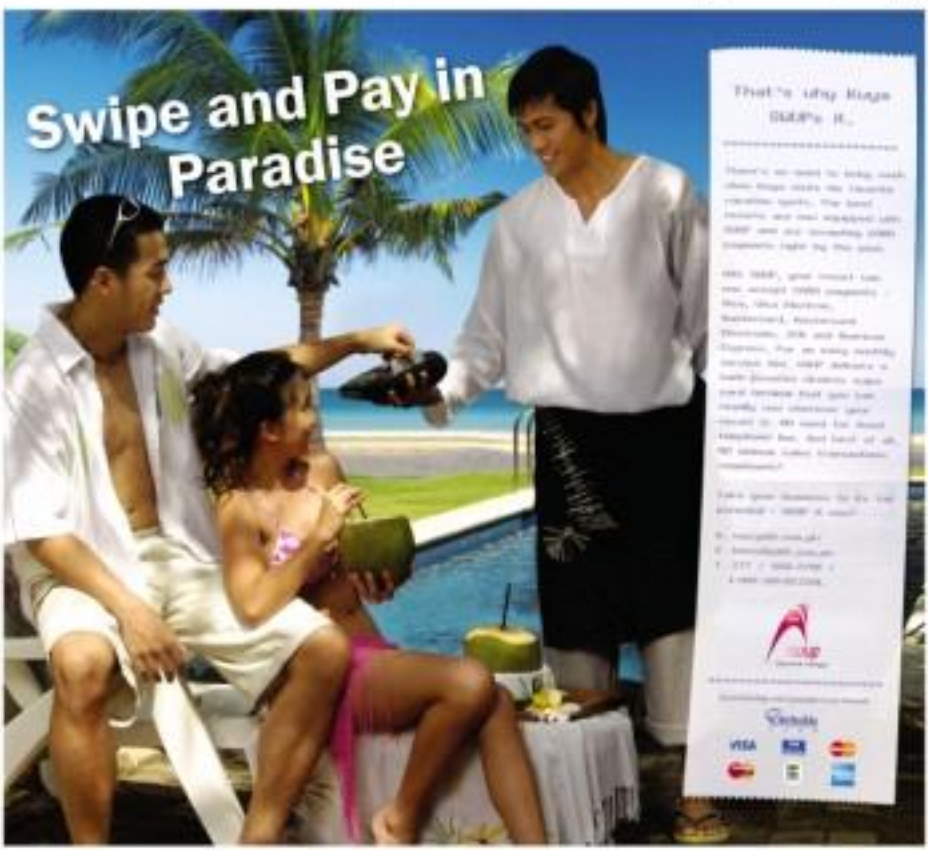
Any deficit has been anticipated, inclusive of losses which may arise from natural disasters," he added.

Serrano said that under the Gintong Ani Kasaganaan (GMA) Rice Program, palay production was targeted to reach 16.2 million metric tons in 2008, up from last year's 15.22 million metric tons. This, he said, would help increase the level of sufficiency to about 90 percent from 87 percent.

Assistance in farm productivity is 3.5 metric tons of palay per hectare from 2.8 metric tons, according to Serrano, is expected to contribute additional production of 200,000 metric tons.

Serrano added that under this program, the department would undertake additional measures to increase production using certified seeds and for organic fertilizer support in some 600,000 hectares of farmlands.

He made the statement in response to a report of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization that listed the Philippines as among the 20



UZ VAN UR BUSINESS
We'll help you earn.

BUSINESS Monday
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Reyino

We'll help you learn.

ALENG NORA works the heavy-duty mixer

Ex-housemaid turns ₱1,000 into multimillion-peso venture

By Janet Luza-Burgos
LIP business for Small Scale Industries

IF SUCCESS IN BUSINESS WERE a recipe, the ingredients required would be hard work, perseverance, love of family and lots of prayers.

Take it from Leonora C. Aliman—Aling Nora to most everyone who works with her.

With that formula, Aling Nora parlayed Cherrico Soap from a ₱1,000 business into a multimillion-peso enterprise that sells to markets in Japan, the United States and United Kingdom.

Impoverished childhood

Nora belonged to a brood of eleven children born to a rice maker in Bolinao, Pangasinan. Nora and the rest of the children learned the trade early. It was tedious, laborious work for her and her siblings. Almost everyday, they worked for into the night, until their hands chafed.

After graduating from grade six, Nora came to Manila and became a housemaid, even as she kept on studying, promising her employer to do all the expected household duties, somehow.

At 17, and three years a housemaid and not yet a high school graduate, Nora decided it was time to move on. She thought she could change her life for the better if she became a seamstress.

A friend used her sister to get Nora a slot in the sewing cle-

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Passionate leadership

"TO RECOGNIZE THE CAPABILITY of a person is a virtue, but to give that person a chance to prove his capability is more than a responsibility, it is a life's commitment." And this recognition, coming from this prestigious institution, not only represents the history of my labor for the past four decades but it also serves as a reminder of a bigger challenge and greater responsibility ahead. The Technological University of Philippines points us expressing appreciation on what I have done and achieved, implies me to do more.

Believing on my life as far, I have come to the view that life is not a destination. Neither is it a 100-meter dash further, it is a long and challenging journey—more like a marathon that calls for perseverance, commitment and stamina. Sure, the marathon can be tough, but if you set your own course and run your marathon at your own pace, life can present wonderful opportunities and experiences.

In the book "Father Everything Rules: Her Married Son" Jaime Cardinal Sin shared that Manuel Kaufmann never drove a man, an executive in a depressed airport, who spoke of a funeral he had attended. It wasn't the funeral that bothered the executive so much, it was the fact that no one had attended. It was a friend of a service based with a placid pond. It was as though a small pebble had been dropped, created a few ripples, and quickly melted as the waters it was as if the pebble was never there.

What had frightened the executive was the feeling that his own life seemed like that—although he had invested extensively, made a lot of money, met a lot of people, and experienced a lot of wonderful things, his life seemed to significance and meaningless—"as though he had never lived." The executive's fear is the same fear that grasps me to strive to live a significance and meaningful life.

Harold Kushner wrote: "Our souls are not hungry for fame, comfort, wealth or power. These rewards create almost as many problems as they solve. Our souls are hungry for meaning, for the sense that we have figured out how to live so that our lives matter, so that this world is at least a little bit different for our having passed through it." I don't think the real issue about it's all said and done?

Living your life

So if how we run our marathon it we call and not someone else's, how then should we live our life? Is success a successful life meant a significant life? First of all, let me say what a significant life doesn't mean. Today, in our society's desperate quest for self esteem, we sometimes lose into the false belief that philosophy that beauty and prominence are our save needs in life and our significance is measured by that. We couldn't be more wrong.

A significant life means living with a sense of destiny, of passion and encouragement, and of meaning. We need to live with the spirit behind the challenging words of George Bernard Shaw. "This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one. The being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap. The being hero of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy."

Success, with its traditional connotations of a lofty salary, a nice home and a country club membership, is no longer a sufficient term to represent the scope and complexity of my desires. As time passes, I realize that I don't just want a hefty paycheck. I want to feel good about how I earn it. I want to take pride in my work, be excited about it, and know that I am growing through it. I don't just want to put an hour of work only to collect a paycheck at age 65. I want to work for myself, write on my own terms, and find new ways to heighten my experience aside from my professional life. I want to live a full life, filled with purpose and fulfillment. I want my life rooted in real and lasting values.

Passion

In working for, managing and leading different organizations for over 40 years, I have learned that those who overcome the doubters to fulfillment and equally easier desire their vigor and not succumb to single source. And that is passion. Not the transitory fancy for the kind that fills them with energy and excitement, gets them up in the morning, and keeps them awake at night. This passion creates personal intensity, uplifts and inspires them. It heightens their performance and enables them to achieve things they may never have dreamed possible. What inspires me is the passion I have for my work, for business and to realizing their dreams.

As Benjamin Disraeli said over a century ago, people achieve greatness when they act from passion. Those who learn to recognize the promptings of their hearts, and then find the courage to follow them, are the ones who run tares, rule nations and create masterpieces. They also, regardless of their circumstances, live with a sense of commitment—a knowledge that they are who they want to be.

In my 40 years of placing in life's marathon, I learned that work does not feel like work at all if you are passionate about what you are doing. When you have a zest and vigor for our work, it requires us and work becomes fun and fulfilling. My passion is to live in such a way that more than are better because of me. I am an ordinary man, but I have learned that I am every bit as capable of being extraordinary as is a president, an olympian, or a Nobel Prize winner. Being a manager and a leader gives me the opportunity to be a part of—to take part in the lives of other people.

Compassionate capitalism

Many years ago, I was stuck in perplexity as to how I can pursue my passion for success and satisfaction at the same time. How can I contribute to social welfare while I was running my private business? While there were an enormous chances for driving, I was looking for a balancing combination in the country. Both Dr Ibn, co-founder of Ayanna urged the term compassionate capitalism to refer to the marriage of business entrepreneurship and social responsibility. Compassionate capitalism is no business to make a profit but is guided by compassion at every step along the way. It dawned on me that I can be a compassionate capitalist and a one who sees himself as a businessman and a social entrepreneur at the same time.

Compassionate capitalism are needed today because the world is changing at a dizzying pace. People everywhere are seeing the difficulties our world is facing. I feel the weight of it every time I pick up a newspaper or turn TV networks. And the issue that is unsettling us most is our economic malaise. All groups of society from government to the family are challenged by problems of leadership, or the lack of it is the root of our problems.

The world needs ethical, value-driven men and women of deep convictions and courage, people who have naturally demonstrated developed and decided upon a way of looking at life that is based on proven values. In every major area of our society today people are crying out for leaders of vision, moral courage, values, ethics and compassion—leaders who will say "I want to make a difference, and I can make a difference."

I am truly privileged to have been nominated to leadership. I heeded the call because it would give me a broader range of opportunity to make a difference. So I believe that the responsibility to make a difference does not only lie with the leaders of our community, organization, country or with those who have been appointed or elected to do a particular job. The challenge of making a positive difference lies with each and every one of us. Whether I have been hope that each person today wants to become the kind of person...a champion for positive lasting. You want your life to be significant by helping to change your world. You want to be able to take something out of the world, but to put something back into it—to make a difference.

Looking back, I can only say I chose my memories and ran it as my own path. I followed my passions, I have created opportunities to learn, to work with and for others. In so doing, I have enjoyed such fun of my journey. I have searched and continued to search to my mission of living a significant life—hearing the feeling of being loved by my family, having friends like you that will come to my side in time of need, being excited to get out of bed every morning to go to my work, growing in my fullest potential as a person, and finally the opportunity of making a difference in someone's life, improving the world for the next generation and finding so peace with God. Being able to solve problems, deposits, to deal with people, to have a happy life home, and to travel around the globe are only windfalls.

I always visualize myself as living in a cocker on a beautiful afternoon. If in 20 years from now I have lived the most productive and positive life I can imagine, my children and grandchildren are living more that comfortable lives. They have enough to be able to give to those who do not have enough. They are growing in live productive lives and make a positive impact on the lives of others. The people I have mentored are passing on the lessons I have taught. The companies I have worked for are more profitable and are more socially responsible. The moral force would look like on our what I needed to do in the next years.

On this note, I would like to extend my deepest thanks by sharing each one of you to strive to live a significant life. According to one, listeners of speeches, are more, or listeners get to remember by two to three key ideas of the speaker. So I hope that these few may words just this one message. Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.

Speech delivered by the author during the Conferment of an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Industrial Management. The author is consul general to Kuwait since and president and CEO of Filipro international Management Group Inc. He handled at mgmcs@pldtdsl.net.ph.)

MAPping THE FUTURE
Edmund L. Jarantilla

BMW Group appoints new RP president

BMW GROUP HAS RECENTLY announced the appointment of Andreas Weber as president of BMW Philippines. He succeeds Dr. Joerg Bruhn, who was assigned to a new role at the BMW corporate headquarters in Munich, Germany after heading BMW Philippines for three years.

Andreas Weber transfers to the Philippines from Germany where he was in charge of the sales region for Berlin and Brandenburg. Since joining BMW in 1997, Mr. Weber lived in Korea for five years and has been assigned in various roles in China and Japan.

BMW Philippines Corp. is a subsidiary of the BMW AG. Since its launch in the Philippines in April 2002, BMW Philippines has developed to the leader in the premium car segment with over 50 percent market share.

BMW Philippines currently offers the youngest and widest product range of cars and motorcycles in the premium segment with four models available at gasoline and diesel variants. Certified pre-owned vehicles are also available through the company's program under BMW Premium Selection program.

The Philippine dealer network is composed of six authorized BMW dealers: Four in Metro Manila, namely Autohaus BMW (Quezon City-Libis), Prestige Cars BMW (Makati), Autostrada BMW (Alabang), Manila BMW (Quezon City-Scout-Tuason Avenue); and one in the provinces, Premier BMW (Pampanga), and Performance BMW (Cebu).

Disney opens fairy tale weddings to gay couples

LOS ANGELES—THE WALT DISNEY CO. HAS changed its policy to allow same-sex couples to participate in a popular fairy tale Wedding program it runs mainly at its two US resorts and cruise line, a Disney spokesperson said on Thursday.

Disney previously had allowed gay couples to organize their own weddings or commitment ceremonies at its wedding rooms at the resorts, but had barred them from participating in Fairy Tale Weddings package and holding the event at locations at Disneyland and Walt Disney World that are set aside specifically for weddings.

Disney had allowed gay couples to take part in its true romantic program but excluded them from buying wedding packages by requiring a valid marriage license. Only the true in Florida, which do not permit same-sex marriages.

Last month, gay website AfterEllen.com criticized Disney for not allowing same-sex couples to participate in the fairy Tale Weddings and Honeymoons program.

Disney has come under fire from religious conservatives, including the Southern Baptist Convention, which boycotted the company as of protesting a gay agenda.

Reuters

Edsa now a WiFi hot-zone

NURSING, CHATTING, AND OTHER usual online stuff can now be done while traveling along Edsa with the launch of the SmartBro Travel, a new wireless fidelity service that makes mobile Internet connection freely along Metro Manila's busiest highway possible.

The SmartBro Travel hot zones at Edsa—stretching from Balintawak in Quezon City to Nichols Terminal in Pasay City—will allow subscribers to surf the Internet, browse websites, download movie and audio files, send and receive e-mails, upload files, watch streaming videos, listen to radio streams, chat using Instant Messaging, store software images and play online games at DSL speed.

The campus mobile WiFi at DSL speed service was launched by Smart SunTel WiFi Philippines Inc., a leading provider of wireless digital solutions for Internet broadband and multimedia communications with affiliates in Hong Kong, Taiwan, China and Japan.

The milestone launch was a "high-tech" event at the Shark Attack Grill and Lounge Club attended by Smart SunTel president COO Richard Su, Smart SunTel Hong Kong officer CEO Lincoln Chen, Smart Philippines information manager for Infotech and summer to the CEO Geoff Chen.

To hook up with the SmartBro Travel, one needs a WiFi-ready laptop, a PDA or a WiFi-enabled mobile phone. Access fees also collected to make laptops WiFi-enabled.

He can buy access online using a credit card or under different plans: Starter WiFi Light 9 Plan (P300), good for 5 hours of WiFi Internet usage within the coverage area); Starter WiFi Moderate 30 (P950, for 10 hours of WiFi usage within the coverage area); and Starter WiFi Unlimited (P850 with an unlimited WiFi Internet usage for one month).

Roadly access plans may also be purchased at Smart Scrabs and Smart Infocentres. Also available is the Starter WiFi Compliant Kit worth P1,200, with a USB adapter for super signal transmission from the client device to the SmartBro Travel wireless network. All of these are first time promotional rates.

From Edsa, the SmartBro Travel is poised to create WiFi hot-zones in other major thoroughfares in the future, including C5, Ayala Avenue, and Roxas Boulevard.

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Ex-housemaid turns ₱1,000...

Pinoy ang Dating B2-3

• By late, he became. But for her ex-big mark-ups she is happy with a profit margin of 91 per product unit.

• Give the business the personal touch. Even as the business has grown bigger, Ms. Ramos still finds it a point to personally talk with clients.

• Be humble. She does not have the aire of someone who has made it. Simple and unassuming, she is often taken as one of the work crew.

Chantria Manage Sandra Ms. She works harder than any of her workers, still taking charge of the mixing process. This way workers respect her and always do their best.

• Go help when you need it. She herself put on the production line to cope finance operations like the Opportunity Microfinance Bank (OMB), which provided her with to business loans.

Now is still the workaholic she has always been. It is the way she likes it to be. She is on her toes trying to improve her products and constantly experiments with different ingredients, with the help of a chemist friend.

Gilbert Sarmiento story is one of those discussed in "Dyaryo Filipino: Mga Kuwento—The Filipino Dail Record" published by the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries and the Small Enterprises Research and Development Foundation. Contact info is: coffee.cake.pk for details.)

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Working with numbers, retiring with words

AFTER ATTENDING A COUPLE OF WRITING workshops conducted by renowned literati Butch Dalisay, alumnus avoids sojourn abroad and a generous supply of red wine serves as a treat for students, PB man alleviates Damian had already in mind a clear picture of his post-retirement life. He would like to continue with productive activities, but this time with him providing tutelage and popping cocks to fill the cups of his protégés.

For almost the lifetime of Pamintuan & Arnaldo (P&A), one of the country's leading accounting firms, Damian has worked as the head of the firm's personnel department. Small firm being one of P&A's severe pioneers, he has first-hand accordingly to be recruited top-of-the-line accountants and auditors, allowing P&A the range to become an industry leader. Also, several programs for hired and showcased the potentials of P&A employees could be announced as his inclusive management.

But now that he is turning 60 (this year) Damian's circumstance in P&A comes to a close as retirement meets him.

"It's required in our rules that after the fiscal year when you become 60 you have to retire," says Damian. "And I think it's a good time to do so because since day one I've already been working nonstop."

After retirement, Damian intends to settle in his retirement home in Sucat, Cavite and establish an office there where he would hold writing workshops. This office, according to Damian, who is a self-confessed cat lover, will be complemented by a small aviary of cats which he would call "Cat-mando" (coat of Nepal's capital city).

Cosmo-cute a difficult one to crack. Why in the world would someone who specializes in numbers—and people relations, too—want to pursue a life dealing with words?

To this, Damian has a brief response: "I always liked to write. I thought even some communication skills so I had which I developed simply because I just like it."

ALFREDO Damian

Since childhood, Damian has always been fascinated with the system of words and the correctness of grammar; decisioning to graduate in a long-way home from school were never easy as same for him, just so that his spoken English got polished.

From there, Damian would continue his "wordy" musings, entering a personal writing life, which he extended by joining the honor category of the Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature; first, as humble contestant in 1989 and then as a judge in 1990. Ambition to be one of the biggest disappointments of his life, for literary glory stays suspended up until now.

Damian's career in P&A began with a seemingly ambitious declaration: Then, the Dean's on founder, Benjamin Pamintuan gave him the best people for us. As Damian, who at that time boasts of a respectable standing in executive awards and personnel management, newsflow to say in audit and accountancy as well, had in himself a certain slant for English Daming, he saw it important to go beyond the credentials of his recruits to refer to bring in to P&A the crème of the crop. Aside from the well-honed rules of his "chosen ones," he, too, gave weights notice to their utmost familiarity of the English language, using it as the means to express clear-cut organization of their thoughts.

"In the long run, assuming we all get good manpower—they know their accounting, they could learn new standards, all [unintelligible]—what will differentiate those who would reach the top would be their ability to deal with people and their communication skills," Damian says.

"Good communication skills speak of confidence," he adds.

Incidentally, this was also how Pamintuan envisioned the edge that he wanted P&A people on have. Pamintuan opted for his associates to be distinguished not just by accounting and auditing skills but also through their effectiveness as communicators, for he deems that to develop solid communication skills would be advantageous as for global competitiveness. With this Pamintuan's vision, Damian indeed exemplifies a perfect partner.

And what is a perfect partner without a legacy to be remembered for? To be regarded as a major contributor in observing the importance of sound communication in the success of each of the firm's workforce is how Damian wants his legacy depicted, finally justifying one of his word's principals.

For yet another personal legacy. To reverse the sentence that is the English language so hard to wrestle into and wrestle, according and non-accounting people alike.

Acer recommends Windows Vista™ Home Premium.

Aspire L310-C83
Powered by Intel® Core™2 Duo Processor E6300
with Genuine Microsoft® Windows Vista™ Home Premium
SRP: ₱9,990 (4,091.67/mo. x 12mos.)

Aspire 1290-C43
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Jackson memorabilia up for sale in auction

MICHAEL JACKSON

NEW YORK – MICHAEL JACKSON'S TRADEmark black fedora and the gold record for his "Thriller" album are among dozens of the pop star's belongings to be auctioned by New York's Guernsey's auction house next month.

The collection includes about 3,000 items from the Jackson family, ranging from handwritten lyrics to Michael's sunglasses and microphones. The celebrity items will be auctioned on May 30-31 at the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Once the subject of a legal battle between Jackson and a former family business partner, the collection spans the Jackson career from the mid-1960s through the early 1990s.

Keepsakes include Janet Jackson's ballet shoes and a Mae West costume she wore in her first performance with the Jackson Five. A black jacket with gold sequined epaulets worn by Michael in his 1988 "Moonwalking" act is also on offer.

Guernsey's has not put a price tag on the collection, but officials expect the bidding for some items to be steep.

"Buyers will be of every description. From the most dedicated fans to the corporate buyer who sees this as interesting material to display," said Guernsey's President Arlan Ettinger.

Fans can also bid for the items on eBay as the time of the live auction, he said.

Jackson exploded into super-stardom with his 1982 "Thriller" album and remains one of the best-selling recording artists of all time. "Thriller" yielded seven top-ten singles and sold 37 million copies in the United States alone.

Soap-making seminar set

HOMES AND BUSINESSES ARE MUSHROOMing on your grocery list.

But do you know that you don't have to pay for them?

You can make them and even make money on the side.

Learn how to make different kinds of soap and start your own soap business.

The Golden Treasure Halia Development Program will conduct a one-day seminar on soap making to be held at the College of Social Work and Community Development Magsaysay Avenue corner Tirona St., University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City on April 21 Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Topics to be discussed are watering of materials and cooking.

Participants will be taught how to make liquid dishwashing soap, liquid hand soap, liquid detergent soap, bar detergent soap, powder soap, herbal bath soap, glycerin (transparent bath soap).

All the materials will be provided. For questions, please call 426-78-20, 952-40-28, 921-39-60, and 913-65-5 and 411-15-77.

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BUSINESS Monday

Bodybuilder pushes gyms to help in nation building

Hopes franchising will increase fitness awareness in Filipinos

Text and Photos by Hazel P. Villa
Inquirer Visayas

KIDAO CITY—TWENTY FOUR YEARS after pioneering the fitness business in Pinoy hometown, model-bodybuilder Al Bruno Chiongson says the interest of the industry is closely tied to the country's progress.

"If people become more conscious about

BODYBUILDING B4

Bank quick and secure – anywhere your adventures may take you

Businessman Oli Wirman loves to explore the Philippines' aquatic wonders – the more remote the better. Not no matter how deep underwater he might be, he still has to be on top of business.

How does he do it then? By doing most of his banking on the road. He's turned it into a pre-trip step as easy and automatic as checking his diving gear.

With BPI Express Mobile, Oli makes it a standard procedure to check his deposits and loan balances and even pay his bills, long before he hits the water – all via his Globe Handyphone, anywhere in the country.

With BPI Express Mobile, you can:

- Manage your BPI or BPI Family Savings Deposit, Credit Card and Loan accounts.
- Pay bills to over 170 merchant partners, including utilities and credit cards.
- Transfer funds real-time.
- Reload Prepaid cellphones instantly.

All these, in a way that's ideal for people who love the open road:

- **Fast** – Transfer funds or pay bills in 20 seconds.
- **Safe** – No worries. BPI uses industry standard technology to secure its mobile banking applications.
- **Easy** – If you can text, you can bank. No sophisticated phones required – all you need is an eligible Globe SIM, whether plan or prepaid.

All the convenience in yours for just the cost of your text messages.

Thanks to BPI Express Mobile, Oli's mind is more than worry free – it's clear, serene and vibrantly alive as the ocean he loves to explore.

So if you can hear the water calling you, here are some places to push your limits:

Diving, Tubbataha Reef, Palawan
It really is paradise! This reef is a national treasure you can come back to again and again.

White Water Rafting, Cagayan Valley
Shoot stunning rapids on an extra-light kayak. It's a wild, unforgettable rush.

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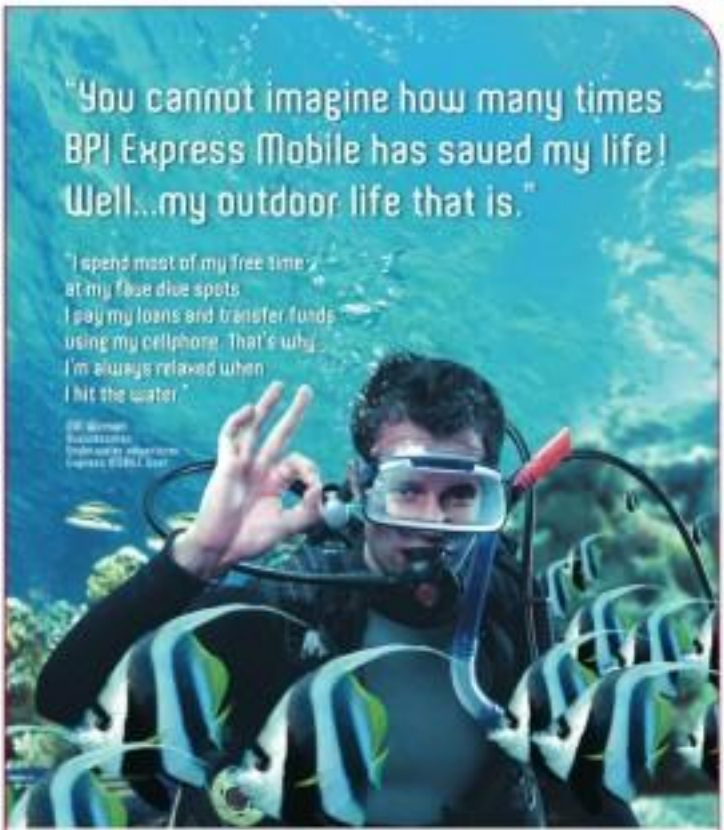

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HD TECHNOLOGY provides enhanced viewing experience for the whole family.

WITH THE BRAVIA/HDTV at the heart of current genius, Sony is able to provide the HD experience to the market in the Philippines.

Letting RP get a glimpse of HD future

By Charles E. Bolcan

IMAGINE THE THRILL OF viewers in the '50s when they finally saw their television programs in color.

Such feelings of awe and excitement could somehow match what a number of today's viewers are experiencing now that their TV sets have taken another leap forward, that is, in being able to show near three-dimensional images and unrealized hues.

In fact, after years of dry runs, HDTV is finally taking off in a handful of countries around the world, specifically the United States, Japan, Australia, Canada and South Korea.

Indeed, high definition (HD) is being heralded as the biggest thing to happen to television since color, as HDTV provides a sharper, clearer and more colorful image than the current standard television picture.

Comparable

"This is due to the way the picture is filmed, broadcast and displayed on a compatible HDTV set that has a greater number of pixels in its display image than on a standard television set. Many of these HDTV broadcasts also include a soundtrack which presents surround sound to viewers wherever they use the appropriate speakers," revealed Arnold Balao, deputy division of Sony Philippines' Home Audio Video (H-Product) Marketing.

Balao added that HD goes beyond delivering realistic images and sounds as the technology elevates the viewers' sense of reality, making them more engaged.

"Most of us here in the Philippines will have to be patient. In the absence of HD broadcast here, Sony is doing its part to let the local market experience this so-called HD difference from the way they record and playback videos and still images to how they share or store these images," Balao said.

Preparing market

Balao said this is Sony's way of preparing the market for the eventual transition to the HD era as well as allow Filipinos to enjoy home entertainment in a different level.

"Since the television is an everyday source of local entertainment, Sony's Bravia line of HD LCD TVs will be the heart of this current genius. Not only can viewers enjoy a consistent, beyond picture quality (it has a matched definition system) when viewing a program, the TV will be able to show—in full HD quality—the videos you captured on a Sony HD Handycam or a Cyber-shot Full HD camera," he explained.

Completing this convergence is Sony's HD printer (DPP-FH01 model) that allows one to view photos taken with a Cyber-shot on an HDTV and Sony's 40-GB hard disc photo storage (HDD-U1 model).

Sony also offers an integrated high definition multimedia interface (HDMI) input that lets one experience impressive video reproduction and picture detail with no digital-to-analog or analog-to-digital conversions required [just connect the HD Handycam or HD Cyber-shot through the integrated HDMI output (via compatible Bravia HDTV).

"So what company in the market offers a more complete line of products that provide unclouded connectivity," Balao said.

TO FULLY enjoy the benefits of HD, Sony has lined up its HD gears to promise enhanced television quality as marked here in the Philippines.

Sony preparing market for transition to the HD era, says Balao

HD explained

To understand what HD means, take a closer look at your television set and notice the tiny rectangular dots—called pixels—making up the images appearing on screen.

Those pixels are also present on HDTV (although they are square in shape and are 4.1 times smaller).

And while a standard definition TV has 640x480 pixels, an HDTV has at least 1280x720 pixels.

"When you take into consideration an HDTV's smaller pixel size, it works out to more than 400,000 more pixels per screen. This means the viewer is getting three times more detail than the best analog television pictures today. The overall picture is so life like, that it's like being there," described Balao.

And while HD is taking time to grow in most parts of the world, Balao said Sony will always be at the forefront of the HD revolution, saying that the company's products are already the industry standard for the professionals and broadcast sector.

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Speaker: Mr. Miguel Ramos, President, Asian Advertising, Inc.

Measuring Brand Equity
Developing Brand Equity Measurement and Management System
Speaker: (To be announced)

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Designing and Implementing Branding Strategies
Speaker: Mr. Jun Alcantara, VP for Marketing, Asia Brewery, Inc.

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Firm ventures into payments system via e-mail

By Rica T. Olchondra

MOSAIC COMMUNICATIONS INC., (MOSAIC), the Philippines' first commercial Internet service provider, has introduced a payment system via e-mail that gives merchants and customers yet another way to facilitate transactions.

Mosaic said that it has started offering an e-mail payment system called PayEasy Mail. It is an expansion of the web-based PayEasy Online Payment System. PayEasy Mail enables email e-merchants and home businesses with websites that have limited e-payment capabilities to simply bill customers and accept their payments via e-mail.

Payments made easy

The merchants simply have to log on to the PayEasy web-based administration page and enter the billing details, name and e-mail address of the customer. The system then sends the customer an e-mail that contains the billing information together with payment options and a link to the PayEasy website where the customer can make the payment.

The customer has to click on the link to reach the website where he will be presented with the billing details and the online payment options. PayEasy Mail handles the entire payment process, including data-entry of the customer's financial details. When the customer completes the payment, the merchant will receive an e-mail advising him of the transaction.

PayEasy accepts payment from all PayEasy-supported online and offline funding sources, such as all major credit cards, Smartlink and Megalink ATM accounts, Globe G-Cash, Smart Money, PayPal, ECPI eTxTime, Western Union, Banco de Oro, Chinabank, and BancWest Bank.

Security and deployment

All the standard fraud-prevention features are also built-in into the system. This covers the standard Address Verification Services, Card Verification Code, checking against the Bank Identification Number, geographical restrictions, and others. All sensitive information supplied is encrypted and securely stored in the payment gateway's database.

After signing up with Mosaic, the merchant can immediately start using the system, with no need for programming or changes to an existing website.

Limitations

Mosaic acknowledged that PayEasy Mail is not a fully integrated electronic payment system because there is a need for human intervention in the transactions.

PayEasy Mail cannot process products that require real-time fulfillment, such that the product is delivered to the customer immediately upon payment. Examples of these include dispensing of electronic PIN codes and issuance of licenses for downloads.

Mosaic said real-time transactions would require the use of the standard PayEasy Online Payment System package.

While PayEasy does a select few businesses have encounter for not practicing the business of their dreams. Whether a merchant is technologically challenged, has limited resources, or simply wants to test the waters, PayEasy Mail can be the first step to building and growing one's customers business.

Sharing dealer success stories

SHELLAME HAS SEEN Bowood in the entrepreneurial pursuits of many young Filipinos the past 40 years.

Jaya Bacli, a second-generation businesswoman who grew up witnessing the multi-business success of her family's Shellane dealership in the north, reminisces: "Our parents started it in 1968. We practically grew up with the business so it was only natural we learned how to run it."

Both economics and entrepreneurship benefit from the [illegible] leadership of Shellane. Dealership businesses with Shellane are a bit because [illegible] of the LPG brand is carried through to the total experience, and reflects upon the dealership as good business sense. "I guess it's because we offer quality products and service, and reliability of supply, that our small business has continued to enjoy success," Bacli remarks.

Just as Shellane is seeing to nights on achieving more success [illegible] 40th year, so do their service like Bacli continues to look on business success. "We are now on our 37th year, so we are hoping that we continue to increase our customers, maintain or even increase the service that we offer," Bacli continues.

Gerry Concepcion, a fellow entrepreneur and Shellane dealer, similarly shares rosy prospects for the future of his business. Concepcion, who is a second-generation businessman who has been distributing Shellane in Oriental Mindoro for the past 25 years. Concepcion recalls the humbling point of their business knowledge: "There were a lot of new players in the market but what has made us and Shellane different is the quality of the products that we offer, along with good service and consistency in the availability of stocks," he states.

"We are looking at opportunities to market not just Shellane but other products here [illegible]," Concepcion excitedly relates. As a Filipino entrepreneur, this spells [illegible] opportunity with the creation of more jobs, and opportunities for fellow businessmen.

"The slump has led to many increases in costs, rates that now make everybody, including Filipino-investors, to put a lot more for their housing loans. The predicament has led to many consolidations to various parts of the US and is beginning to squeeze the previously liquid property market dry," said commercial real estate broker Leon Kim of Los Angeles, California.

Kim, who has also been [illegible] in the property [illegible] Philippines, expressed fears that the situation could worsen such that the real estate sector should not't widening their market and even look for other markets elsewhere, one [illegible] Filipinos in other parts of the world.

He said that if only those Philippine developers catered to the global baby boomers as a whole, and not just the Filipinos, they could still ride these projects and sustain their operations all the anticipated boom in Philippine real estate.

"On the bright [illegible], a small fraction of a big wheels is still bigger than a big fraction of a small wheels. This (global market) is the only way to dispose of all the projects inventories that are mushrooming from various Philippine developers who are all eyeing the same group of prospects...the Filipinos whose so-called 'imaginary wealth' is starting to vanish to thin air," Kim pointed out.

Such [illegible] wealth sprung from the [illegible] boom when [illegible] and other Americans made earnings, not really from jobs or businesses, but mainly from trading in on their home equities and profits from flipping homes that they acquired under low mortgage [illegible].

"Even low income people [illegible] could buy above-market homes due to the lenient lending guidelines and almost zero down payment programs, thus enabling many FilAms to buy second homes, necessity in the US, but also in the Philippines. But now, that party is over with the economic and real estate structure in the US," Kim explained.

Nevertheless, Filipino-American Susan Ibañez, president [illegible] sees to the Philippines of the US National Association of Realtors, sees the property [illegible] as an eye-opener.

"As they say, success happens when there's an other opportunity [illegible] this might just be the [illegible] that will make local developers go global and put the Philippines in the global real estate map," Ibañez remarked.

"Our rising real estate in the US for Fil-Am would not be [illegible] down. The Fil-Am are within the global market for the global market, for is not within the Fil-Am," Ibañez stressed, urging the best option would be to "bring the wealth to the Philippines" through the 1st Asian International Real Estate Expo and Conference (AREEC) slated as the PICC on Dec. 6 to 10.

Ibañez is the proponent of AREEC, which is supported by many real estate industry organizations in various parts of the world.

"Events like this (AREEC) is the fastest way to reach the world. Many other prestigious developers utilize this system to promote their projects and services globally, but [illegible] advantage in AREEC is in being local. This could just be their show [illegible] they should be the star?" Ibañez added.

AREEC being in Asia is one of the appeals of the event. "In fact, investors from all other regions are now eyeing this emerging market (Asia) to invest in. Asia is one of the destinations that these investors are looking into, and investing with local partners who know the market is the current trend. All other Asian countries have been aggressive in marketing themselves to the global marketplace; it is time the Philippines finally take action or follow the trend," Kim said.

Nonetheless, the Philippine Department of Tourism (DOT), which has taken notice of this booming trend, is also promoting the country in a second-home destination to its priority markets. In fact, several [illegible] are now taping Japanese and Korean investors to give up such countries, related facilities to increase local capacity to accommodate [illegible] tourists, investments, special [illegible] visitors and retirees.

One such real estate event that the DOT supports is AREEC, which the [illegible] promoting across the globe, hoping to tempt [illegible] to visit countries.

US PROPERTY slump predicted two years ago happening now

US housing crunch seen to squeeze RP developers' Fil-Am market dry

THE CURRENT US PROPERTY slump, which had been predicted two years ago, is now happening and is expected to take its toll on the Philippines' real estate sector by which will be heavily on dollar earning Filipino-Americans and other overseas Filipinos for the sales of its housing units.

"The slump has led to many increases in costs, rates that now make everybody, including Filipino-investors, to put a lot more for their housing loans. The predicament has led to many consolidations to various parts of the US and is beginning to squeeze the previously liquid property market dry," said commercial real estate broker Leon Kim of Los Angeles, California.

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Bodybuilder pushes gyms ...

From page B3-1

fitness, they have transcended the boundary of eating, drinking, socializing, browsing and other social activities," Chongson, 52, who owns five branches of Winners Gym here.

While Winners Gym has received the onslaught of competition and business losses, Chongson says there is much to be done before inviting more membership because people have yet to overhaul their concept of fitness and going to the gym.

"Most people go to the gym for contact [illegible], but this is still limiting. We must realize that fitness is a lifestyle, part and parcel of personal development. If you can maintain your vat, why not your body?" he says. "Therefore, the role of the fitness managers in the gym is also to coach clients on the proper mind-set."

Chongson got his modelling break in a shampoo commercial in 1989. During his bodybuilding prime, he was a Mr. Philippines contestant-up, and the premier National Mixed Pairs Champion of the Philippines.

The gym is a business. To maximize the dismal and tighter turn rates, Winners Gym highlights its competitive advantage in terms of its equipment, its fitness programs and its roster of qualified trainers who "can design any workout program to help you reach any fitness goal."

Winners Gym does not have wrong-size flat rate because each branch targets a different market, and there is no variation in the equipment in the gyms. Its branch at the Ecola Sports Complex on Magsaysay Avenue for example charges P400 a month for members—with free runs in the sports oval. He are considered owners [illegible] trainers [illegible] it is downtown hotel charges P1,500.

"The rates do vary with the season, and we are right in the midst of the summer promo period," says Chongson.

Most requested services

Like in Manila, Chongson says the most requested fitness service is personal weight training. Next the specialized group exercises, such as Bora aerobics, cardio kickboxing and various martial arts and dance programs, have loads their mark.

Recently, ballroom dancesports excitedly dancing have become popular.

Chongson says he has kept Winners Gym afloat by putting dental procedures first and having the attitude of "I am rich this year" during economic slumps when people would scrub up on food or give priority to educational plans rather than fitness.

"Anyone who wants to go into the gym business should learn to see people develop and blossom physically. This should be your consuming glory," he says.

Chongson also owns and manages Wildcat Promotion which has organized more than 15 national and regional bodybuilding championships. The events are meant to showcase cutting edge competition physiques and materials heightened public interest in gym services, he says.

Winners Gym-Winner Promotions' first national bodybuilding championship was organized in 1986 and was responsible for what Chongson calls "Iloilo City's first major international sports event"—the 1986 Federation of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Bodybuilding Championships.

Franchising a gym

Winners Gym-Winner Promotions is organizing the 2007 National Bodybuilding Association Asia-Pacific Bodybuilding Championships in Boracay on April 28 to 29.

Chongson is now franchising Winners Gym. He will provide the equipment, instructors and training of staff.

A Business Management graduate of Ateneo de Manila, Chongson says small cities and big towns can now support gyms because of economic growth in these areas, especially as a result of the work-growing OFW families who have disposable income.

"We are positioning Winners Gym as a major factor in development, especially through the franchise offer. We are geared toward enabling communities and their individuals to have a glimpse of a better haven for themselves, health-wise and fitness-wise."

Chongson sees fresh focus, with a population of 90 million, but only 25,000 gyms nationwide. It exhibits the high-end of the fitness development linkage. In the lower scales, the Philippines, with 40 million people, is struggling along with less than 1,000 gyms, he says.

There are occasions when the number of visiting Korean students in Winners Gym rivals the number of local members.

Partnership with LGUs

In particular, Chongson feels that partnerships with local government units (LGUs) could be an integral part of the franchising offer. Through this, the chain of franchisees Omega and sports development.

"This will give participating LGUs a fitness gym base from which to direct and focus long-term sports/fitness development programs. In the long run, yes, produce world-class athletes for the nation faster," he says.

"Athletic strength training is a total training factor in most local sports development programs, where all can obtain education for tournament regimen and aesthetic take the look shape of sports development organizers."

"When this local gym franchising effort succeeds, it will elevate fitness and sports exercise to become more grass-roots based and better integrated with national development. It would be nice to leave a legacy where our society is more fitness-oriented, with higher sports goals becoming more achievable, where a fitter citizenry tackles and solves challenges better, to achieve national goals sooner," says Chongson.

WORKING out is one of Winners Gym's

BUSINESS Monday

Tobacco farmers in Kentucky shift to prawns

BUTLER, KENTUCKY—BY A TRENDsetter, Burt Moreland raised tobacco and fattened eggs over soybean—once in his rural Kentucky town. Forty years later, Moreland farms prawns instead of tobacco, doesn't smoke and spends free time trying out new recipes for a twice-weekly shrimp dinner.

"Since I was a little kid, I was involved in tobacco. My grandfather and father both raised it, and I had my own crop in high school," says Moreland fondly, before shrugging: "But once the buyout came, I got tired of dealing with it."

It's a cold April morning in Kentucky tobacco country, and Moreland is heading two boats south to collect 40,000 prawn hatchlings, which he hopes will grow through the summer into a bumper harvest of 1,700 pounds of genuine Kentucky seafood.

Like many small farmers in the state known for bourbon, thoroughbred horses and a good cigar, Moreland found himself without a tobacco crop in 2009, when Congress eliminated the quota system that had cushioned generations of farmers.

The industry funded $10 billion in buyouts turned many of Kentucky's smallest farmers to beekeeping, goat farming, mushroom growing and...prawns, huge most surprisingly in this land locked state—aquaculture.

Some 125 Kentucky farmers raise fish or prawns, according to Angela Coppedge, aquaculture coordinator at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. While that's just a fraction of Kentucky's 84,000 farms, the fact that the state even has an aquaculture coordinator surprises many.

"A lot of people had to give up tobacco and were looking for something to replace that income," explained Coppedge.

Farms are, the same goes Kentucky sweet that made great bourbon was just as good for fish.

"The limestone waters are great, and there's a lot of groundwater," said Coppedge. "And while fish farming can be very high-tech, it's also user-friendly. These guys are farmers, they know how to nurture and keep things alive. The basic principles are not all that different, whether it's tobacco or prawns."

Moreland, 58, is a Kentucky shrimping pioneer. He started his first pond in 1994 on a few acres of land that drained too poorly to grow good hay, corn or tobacco.

"I read an article about prawn farming. I liked shrimp. It was a novel idea. I thought I'd try it," he says simply.

By the time the buyout ended his tobacco crop 10 years later, Moreland was a shrimping expert and looking to expand.

He's added a third pond, built a system of indoor tanks to rear hatchlings, and now struggles to find enough buyers at harvest time in September.

When Moreland arrives at Warren Gayle's home-based hatchery near Franklin, the Kentucky State University aquaculture expert shows off a tank of egg-swollen mother prawns, as well as tank after tank of nearly microscopic orange hatchlings.

Gayle, a native New Yorker, supplies farmers throughout the Midwest with prawn hatchlings and tilapia. He says the hardest part for farmers is finding a market come September.

In this frozen and cornbread state we're in, seafood is not traditional, and farmers need good marketers," Gayle says.

The relatively high cost of raising the prawns is also a barrier to quick sale. Moreland pays Gayle three cents apiece for his 40,000 hatchlings, each barely larger than a grain of sand. Add the cost of water, daily feedings and electricity to keep the indoor tanks warm until the prawns are transferred to outdoor ponds in June, and costs quickly mount.

Moreland hopes to sell his shrimp, head on and unpeeled, for $8 a pound during a two-week period in late September.

Imported shrimp from Asia, thawed and ready to eat, is much cheaper and available year round.

"They can bring it over here peeled, deveined and headed cheaper than we can grow it," Gayle says.

As a result, Kentucky shrimpers are targeting niche markets. Ethnic Asians who like live seafood, high-end restaurants willing to pay more for fresh prawns, and even avid aquariums with hungry penguins to feed and budgets to pay for the fish.

For his part, Moreland has gotten used to eating his way through the harvest leftovers, and friends and family stop by year-round to buy a bag of frozen prawns for dinner. Reuters

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THE I AM HOME Countries of the Asian Handicraft Promotion and Development Association are holding the 1st Alcanta International Arts and Crafts Expo in the Philippines. All countries are invited to participate to exhibit their crafts, join the business forum and showcase their various cultures.

Photo shows Pieter Soetsing of Indonesia, Keith Tan of Singapore, Rose Teodoro of the Philippines, Khun Surapon Rajsuvarnajee of Thailand, Miss T. Gobor of the Philippines, Sjahrul Djamaluddin of Indonesia, Dr. Anuntawidya Pornpaiya of Thailand and Edric Ong of Malaysia.

Standing at the back are Dr. M. R. Rujaya Abhakorn of Thailand, Zainal Arifuddin Haji Abdul Rahman of Brunei Darussalam and Dr. Eaton Hogan of Singapore.

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MMC

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BUSINESS Monday

Who are the ethical Filipino managers

Study indicates workplace can be made to support ethical conduct

By Raniel F. de Asis
Contributor

ETHICAL FILIPINO MANAGERS ARE HIGH on cognitive moral reasoning, low on intelligence and have high spiritual intelligence.

Worldwide, business leaders have stressed the importance of looking at the moral conscience of leaders and managers who make up the field of business.

In a special report written in January 2002 by Bruce Nussbaum titled "Can you trust anybody anymore?" he wrote, "There are business executives that are cynical and so jaded using that they profoundly disdain our most deeply held beliefs about the honesty and integrity of our corporate culture."

Enron Corp. is one of them. The lesson from the Enron debacle should be "to rewrite basic energetics to the business boys, ethics to business professionals."

Business ethics guru J. Waters said much the same thing in his article, "Business Ethics in Practice," published in the journal Economics and Society, that in recent years the moral behavior of a corporation depends on a large variance on the moral conscience of its owners and managers.

Code of ethics for RP

This observation is not lost among our Filipino business leaders and moral guardians. In 1997, in its general assembly, the Philippines' Bishops Businessmen's Conference for Human Development called for the formulation of a code of ethics for Philippine business that would guide the committed businessperson in the management of his business and against which he could question and measure his policies, decisions and operations within his firm and the larger society.

A committee was subsequently formed consisting of businessmen from small to huge businesses and industries.

Despite this recognition of the significance of having ethical business practices as early as 1997, more than 10 years later, the Philippines was ranked as the 11th most corrupt among nations in a 2002 global survey by Transparency International, an international coalition against corruption. The country shared the spot with Pakistan, Romania and Zambia.

In a survey conducted among 13 Asian countries in January and February 2007 by the Political and Economic Risk consultancy based in Hong Kong, the Philippines was ranked as the number one most corrupt among Asian nations.

Common attributes

The perceived worsening state of corruption has led this author to conduct an empirical research to study on the attributes common to ethical business leaders and the factors that may influence a business leader's ethical decision making. Interestingly, the findings have practical implications to organizational recruitment, retention and leadership policies.

The results of the research work reveal the make-up of ethical Filipino business managers to include a high level of cognitive moral reasoning, low level of mindfulness and high spiritual intelligence—the last two being dimensions of spiritual intelligence as key attributes common to individuals who practice ethical decision making and behavior.

Cognitive moral development

Social psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg who developed the six stages of moral development collectively refers to the last two stages as the post-conventional level of cognitive moral development and stage of higher reasoning.

For the unfamiliar, the first stage of cognitive moral development is known as the punishment and obedience orientation where an act is defined as good or bad depending on the resulting action whether the act merited a reward or punishment.

The second stage, known as the instrument and relativity orientation, depends on how satisfying the act is in addressing the person's needs. Thus, an act is good to be good if it satisfies the person's needs.

The third stage, called the interpersonal concordance orientation, classifies an act as good if it meets the expectations of the group's (family, friends) belongs to.

The fourth stage, termed as the law and order orientation, classifies the system as good or bad depending on the dictates of the larger society. If society tolerates the action, then it must be good.

Few individuals are able to reach the last two stages, collectively called the stages of cognitive moral development. Instead, few engage in moral reasoning processes when making a decision confronted by an ethical issue.

Kohlberg maintains that the last two stages are defined by ethical principles of justice and rights.

He maintains, "Stage five focuses on the social contract orientation, a stage where the person believes that the rightness and wrongness of an action is driven by the ways of reaching consensus by agreement, contract and due process.

Stage six called the universal ethical principles orientation is defined in terms of moral principles that are logical, universal and consistent where justice, society's welfare, equality of human rights, and respect for the dignity of individual human beings prevail."

Business ethicists have reached general agreement that a person's high level of cognitive moral reasoning helps practice ethical decision making in business.

Factors

Understanding spiritual intelligence (SQ)

Richard Dickman, author of the best selling book that dwells on spiritual intelligence (SQ), "Thinking with your Soul" analyzed qualities of the self-aware person (SQ) versus other the Intellectuality (spiritual conviction) (IQ) reward among several thousands of individuals worldwide, posits seven factors that make up human spiritual experience and behavior.

These are the person's level of divinity, mindfulness, intelligently, consistency, consciousness perception, childhood spirituality and trauma.

Divinity is associated with the level of awareness and sense of connection to a Higher Being or Divine Presence. Mindfulness points to a strong connection between mind and the body i.e. the state of wellness of the body is an extension of the mind. Also, it refers to the level of affiliation with other people. Consciousness perception means the level of psychic awareness or circle sees while consciousness refers to the level of involvement with a group in a variety of social and spiritual activities.

Intellectuality refers to the degree of conscious desire and commitment to read, study, discuss and engage in critical thinking. Trauma means the degree of experiences of physical or emotional pain and suffering while childhood spirituality refers to the degree of

WHO ARE IN 2

Creating a niche market with home-cooked food

WHEN ROMAL RUSHOMAHARANI opened Swagat Indian Cuisine in 2003, little did she know that it will have a set of loyal followers.

"I partly attribute the success of my food venture to a very significant date—April 16—when I signed the lease contract with PCE Building in Ilaba Street in Makati. The next date is the fifth anniversary of Hindu deity Rama and Sita and Friday in the Christian calendar," Romal recalls.

But beyond Rinda proximity, she believes that it is her healthy and no frills home-style cooking which have made Swagat hold its own against the fusion restaurants in the country's financial capital.

Armed only with a little capital, a prayer, and an encouraging initial feedback from the food tasteless, she tried her luck in entering the fancy of Filipinos' taste buds with a not-so-popular foreign cuisine.

"After a few months, we were able to make inches food a staple among the Makati lunch crowd, while the Indian community provided a steady stream of customers," Romal says.

The unassuming restaurant manageress points to the warm welcome extended to her by her customers with a distinct accent, framed hand movements and flamboyant MTVs.

ROMAL Khershandani

It has no laughter restrictions, belly dancers, nor serene ambience. But what it lacks in such the Filipino experiences, it compensates with its warm service and tasty dishes.

Swagat literally means "welcome" in the Hindi language.

Such authentic home cooking and affordable prices is what helped it bag the best Indian Restaurant Award in the Philippine Quality awards for Business Excellence and the Global Brands Awards both in 2006.

The award was given after pulling a sample population across Metro Manila which frequently dine out.

Among Swagat's best-sellers is the paella like sangam biryani or flavored spicy Indian rice with lean, tender pieces of chicken, lamb, cooked in herbs and spices. Literally meaning "meeting place," sangam was named after Romal's first food venture—the Sangam Cafeteria in Gryland Busing Town a few years back.

Other variants of the biryani are mogul (shrimp), mutton, anda (scrambled egg), and shrimp which is good for two servings.

Swagat also offers a complete meal from appetizers, soups, main dishes, desserts and drinks.

Vegetarians can have a field day with the breakfast-time fare dishes.

Romal noted that most Indians are vegetarians and follow a healthy diet which accounts for their long life span.

And with the growing health consciousness among Filipinos, she expects the venture to become a mecca of not for vegetarians.

A cross-section of the society Romal sees the big city belonging to food chain business, diplomatic corps, prominent executives and journeys have gone through the doors of the restaurant.

After all is said and done, a good eat at Swagat is a cultural and health-full gastronomic adventure into the heart of India without hurting the budget.

Romal is so confident with her cooking that she's got no date about she is posing in every diner: "Don't pay if you are not satisfied with the food."

Service is not enough.

Swagat is at the PCE Building, 139 Ilaba St., Legaspi Village, Makati City with website www.swagatindian-cuisine.com.

Four ways to support ethics in the workplace

THE RESULTS OF THIS CRUISE STUDY [underlines by the author] indicate that the work environment can be structured in a way that supports ethical conduct. Some of the ways that organization development (OD) and human resource training strategies can apply these learnings include:

1. Inclusion of cognitive moral development tools in pre-employment and employment to identify early on the individuals who can be developed and singled out to lead key decision-making groups.

2. Training managers more include moral reasoning and principles-based training to encourage reflective, ethical thinking among employees. Also, spiritual intelligence techniques (programs that are principles-based and include self-discovery exercises and case workshops may be conducted.

3. Employers must encourage employee participation in community service programs.

4. Employers must reward employee pursuit of ethical practice and conduct.

Background of the study

The empirical round study was conducted among a random sample of entrepreneurs, middle to senior level managers with at least five subordinates. Data was cross-validated against feedback from the participating bosses' managers' superiors and at least two of their subordinates.

What respondents were in general management and occupied deputy level, chief operating officer or general manager positions. These managers hold finance-related jobs, while some are in the fields of production and operations, support services and sales and marketing and human resource. A number of respondents worked in services firms that included financial and insurance services, retail, food, government owned corporations, manpower and telecommunications. The rest were in manufacturing, pharmaceutical, telecommunications, petroleum, airline, power companies, freight forwarding, medical, construction, manpower and real estate business. Nifty percent of the respondents were aged 31 to 50 years old. There were more male business managers respondents (54 percent) than female business managers (46 percent).

Raven E de Asis

Who are the . . .

Frequent and meaningful spiritual activities early in life such as attending religious services or being read the Bible at home.

Ethical Filipino managers

In the dissertation study reported by this author, it was found out that the practice of ethics in the workplace among Filipino business managers, even among marketers, is based on an individual's ability to engage in cognitive moral reasoning and have a spectra of intelligence characterized by less individual area and a high level of intellectuality.

Filipino business managers who engage in moral reasoning and critical, reflective thinking when faced with an ethical dilemma are far more likely to be ethical. This means that ethical Filipino managers who are principled thinkers, characterized by a higher level of moral reasoning, are not likely to be influenced by other people or other people's expectations.

Principled thinkers are guided by an internal moral compass based on what they believe is true, just, humane, right and logical. Also, they have a high respect for the dignity of individuals.

There is a direct proportional relationship between moral reasoning and intellectuality, one area of spiritual intelligence. Filipino managers who have high cognitive moral reasoning also scored high on intellectuality. These individuals engage in critical thinking, and are curious, committed to the road, study, question, discuss and reflect including aspects of spirituality, even traditional religious literature and philosophy.

On the other hand, there is an inversely proportional relationship between cognitive moral reasoning and mindfulness. Filipino managers who have high cognitive moral reasoning have low scores on mindfulness. High scorers, on the other hand, indicate an individual who has high affirmations and purposely seeks and relates highly the company and appreciates the values.

According to Webster, those with low affective needs are comfortable being on their own and pursuing their activities in a solitary fashion.

Highly principled individuals do not mind being solitary or having a lone voice as long as they believe and abide by prescriptive ethical principles of justice and rights. Likewise, individuals with higher ego thinking are more independent of external influences.

The same research revealed that highly principled individuals are likely to be low in mindfulness.

Moreover, data from the empirical research revealed that role modeling is a strong behavioral indicator of ethical practice. Moral business ethics training and holistic manners that aim at modeling is critical for cognitive moral development theory. According to them, followers are strongly influenced by what leaders do, say and reward. They look up and look around for guidance from supervisors and their peers. They are likely to follow what they see modeled around them.

In business environments these individuals who have reached principled levels of moral reasoning must be singled out to lead key decision-making groups. Partly, these individuals can be identified with the use of cognitive moral development instruments such as the one the author has used in the empirical research.

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM
Provincial Agrarian Reform Office
Quezon Province, Lucena City

NOTICE OF COVERAGE

Pursuant to Section 7 of Republic Act (RA) No. 6657, otherwise known as the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988, the Republic of the Philippines, thru the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), hereby submits under the coverage of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) the landholdings and/or landowners listed below:

Registered Landowner(s)	Location of Property	Title No.
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Prepaid load service allows you to buy and sell via the Net

THE SPIRIT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP is truly alive and well among the Filipino youth. Load.com.ph is the brainchild of two young entrepreneurs, Erick Xulayabas and Joey Uy, who shared a vision of making it big in the prepaid loading service.

The idea came about as many Filipinos are now comfortable doing transactions through their mobile phones. This was initiated through features offered by our local telco operators in getting us to use our cell phones to access pilot basic needs ranging from simple entertainment to making seemingly complex money transfers. Now a new trend is getting us Web-wary shoppers to use the Internet for transacting as well. At Load.com.ph, the credits are load in to your mobile phone are shared as good as cash. You can use your load credits to buy or sell cell phone load, game cards, Internet cards, phone cards, and other prepaid cards at discounted rates in load.com.ph.

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- Buy load credits using your ATM, credit card, Smart Money, or bank deposit
- Have to print your own transaction history
- Avail of other existing and future Load.com.ph promos and services

Load.com.ph is the only universal prepaid loading service provider which accepts payment from virtually all domestic cards, credit card (Visa, Mastercard, JCB, US checks, US direct debit, Smart Money, Smart Padala, E-Cash. They even have their very own prepaid card—the all-in-1 prepaid card which you can use to buy cell phone load and other prepaid cards available in the Philippines. Just look for the All-in-1 prepaid card from Load.com.ph at your nearest convenience or anywhere store. Enter your card number and PIN via Web, SMS, or WAP to credit your Load.com.ph account instantly.

Load.com.ph is committed to providing quality service at the best rates possible. Another payment breakthrough in load forward to roll for their launch of the Philippine premier online payment facility—paybox. It will be the largest convergence of the Philippines. Watch out for its launch soon.

UNILAB WINS 2007 ECoP GRAND KAPATID AWARD

United Laboratories, Inc. (Unilab), the country's largest and leading pharmaceutical and healthcare company, won this year's prestigious Grand Kapatiran Sa Industriya (KAPATID) Award from the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECoP), in what has been regarded as the 'toughest and tightest race ever' in the history of ECoP awards. The Board of Judges chose Unilab over 14 other major firms.

KAPATID Awards is a biennial ECoP activity started in 1995 that recognizes firms which exemplify sound and harmonious management and worker relationship, enterprise level cooperation for better productivity, product and service quality, improved workplace conditions, enhanced relationship with society, and wealth creation and employment preservation.

Unilab was rated consistently high in the four decisive criteria: industrial peace and harmony, productivity and quality, social accountability, and strategic visioning and partnering for business and job survival, making it most deserving of the Grand KAPATID Award, the highest recognition accorded to a company for outstanding overall human practices.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo personally handed the three-piece Ramon Orlina glass sculpture trophy to Unilab officials during the awarding rites last March 21 at the Centennial Hall of the Manila Hotel.

In 2005, Unilab was the awardee for outstanding achievement in industrial peace and harmony. This time, Unilab won the Grand Award over 14 other major firms. Labor and Employment Secretary Arturo Brion and Director Linda Kobblitz of the International Labor Organization (ILO) led this year's board of judges.

Sustained commitment to excellence

"This award is meaningful to us because this affirms our steadfast efforts in continually improving ourselves – from sound operational processes and people management to corporate social responsibility," remarked Unilab Chairman of the Board Jocelyn Campos Hess.

Unilab was cited for its practice of 'Bayanihan,' which has traditionally been at the core of its management philosophy and the hallmark of its corporate culture. The unilab is here demonstrated by its Employees Council structure in labor management where management and employees have joint responsibility in looking after the employees' welfare. The Employees Council is a model for labor relations in the country today.

Unilab was also cited for its outstanding productivity and quality practices that ensure a steady stream of high-quality and affordable medicines in the country, achieving 21 percent market share – the highest in an industry dominated by the world's biggest multinational pharmaceutical companies.

Unilab was also recognized for striking a balance between its business objectives and its social accountability, undertaking high-impact and sustainable corporate social responsibility programs that help address health problems in the country. More important, Unilab's Pharmacoconvivencia and Pharmacare lifeline advocacy platforms enable it to make quality healthcare more affordable, helping address a perennial social problem where many Filipinos are unable to afford medicines due to their high cost. "More than recognition, the Grand KAPATID Award inspires us to continually find ways to further improve our business practices that fulfill our commitment to our key stakeholders, particularly our own people and the society we serve," Unilab Vice Chairman Cristina Campos Hess said.

Unilab President & CEO Carlos Ejercito, who was out on a business trip to South America at the time of the Awards, gladly noted that the Grand Award bolsters Unilab's confidence in pursuing its long-term plans while sustaining its industry leadership. "This award challenges us to maintain a high level of performance as we set our sights on aggressive growth and expansion plans for the future," he said. "We consider the Grand KAPATID Award as a building block to pursuing this vision."

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo personally hands the Grand KAPATID trophy to Unilab Chairman of the Board Jocelyn Campos Hess and Unilab Vice Chairman Cristina Campos Hess

"This award is meaningful to us because this affirms our steadfast efforts in continually improving ourselves – from sound operational processes and people management to corporate social responsibility."
– Chairman Jocelyn Campos Hess

The three-piece Grand KAPATID glass trophy sculpted by National Artist Ramon Orlina is a hand clasp symbolizing partnership between management and its employees

HONDA

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All-new

CR-V

CROSSOVER SUV

HONDA

Cubans fret over pesos before politics

HAVANA—MARTHA, A CUBAN PENSIONER, has enough to eat: aside low fixed ration books and a monthly stipend equivalent to about $10. The environmental hazard next door is medieval: an corals and she is on the list for a new Chinese-made fridge.

Yet, seven after selling fried plantain snacks on the side, she can't save enough for the $7 bags of cement she wants to patch up her freaky-wooden house on the edge of Havana.

"We can't think about luxuries. From the moment a Cuban wakes up he must think about food, and that's all," she says, resting on her porch.

While the outside world watches Fidel Castro's dire recovery from stomach surgery and speculates about Cuba's future, talk in Cuba is still more about the daily battle to stretch one's income than the politics behind it.

Older Cubans get fearful at the idea of a post-Castro Cuba.

Younger Cubans say they are tired of living in a time warp.

But in a country with no public opinion polls and a state-run media, it's hard to measure what Cubans really think, and there is a long battle ahead even to envision the one-party communist system as biological.

"We don't have external journey in Cuba. But we have to be inventive. We don't have time to think about politics," said Martha, 59, who withheld her last name.

From the Fidel memo in family-run snack joints to the Chinese-made clothes in state-run government stores, Cuba is visibly better off than a decade ago, when it was recovering from the economic dive caused by the demise of the Soviet Union's collapse.

But for government employees, from teachers to doctors, a pair of jeans still costs two month's wages.

Since Cuba began easing small business licenses in the 1990s, to combat the blow from losing Soviet aid, a sliver of society earns above the roughly $15 monthly state wage doing things like filling cigarette lighters or selling books.

But they still have their heads down, focused more on making ends meet than on rebellion. Only 80-year-old leader's keep almost from view means Cuba is on the cusp of a change.

Accountants hitchhike

In crumbling Old Havana, Estrella is an economics graduate but works cutting hair to buy schoolbooks from room, struggling to make enough pesos to buy US$ priced hair products.

"All the debate is going on outside. Here, things are quiet," she said, first changed the subject to ask for help getting a modern hairstyle from abroad.

The state-run economy is in better shape than in years, thanks to exports of nickel, tourism, high nickel prices, Chinese loans and generously financed Venezuelan oil.

With a nod to its free education, housing and healthcare, the United Nations ranks Cuba fifth out of 177 nations on its 2006 human development index, a measure of living standards, beating Jamaica, Mexico and socialist ally Venezuela.

Yet Cubans can't buy or sell cars or houses and hardly any have mobile phones or computers. Even accountants hitchhike.

Many Cubans rely on remittances from relatives abroad to buy imported goods, which are priced in "convertible pesos," roughly equivalent to dollars.

Some get covered jobs to tourism or work unofficially as tour guides, sales touchers or owners for romance-seeking tourists. In hard times, others trade factory goods.

"I can't do anything with my pay," said Ricardo, who said he sells 300 Havana cigars by hand each day, earning the equivalent of a $10 cost for each one, and makes extra hustling a few to tourists.

Nobody wants chaos

At home, Cubans invade near perfect state-owned calm.

Factory who can afford disposable diapers wash and reuse them.

Many dream of the end of the US trade embargo and an economic opening that could bring a new world of fast food and shopping.

Yet they also fear a sudden change that would threaten their free schooling and hospitals. The state-run media paints a bleak picture of life under capitalism, and many Cubans see the outside world blighted by violent crime and wealth divides.

"We have a big advantage over other countries. Whatever happens with Fidel, no one wants what we have to be taken away," said Vicente Wilder, 32, as he fished off Havana's Malecon sea wall for something fresh for supper.

Living in a strange climate that sees mild recently filled by the long speeches of their leader, Cubans say what they fear most is instability.

"Many people are angry. It's a bit like a pressure cooker," said one Havana resident. "But nobody wants chaos." Meanwhile, analysts and would-be investors agree that Cuba has recovered enough to take a closer look. Any role might limit designated successor Raúl Castro's ability to engineer Chinese-style reforms.

Reuters

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LIFE&ARTS

Fill planet earth with music

Classical artists band together for the Earth Day 2007 concert

FILL THE WORLD WITH love and with music, that most joyous form of all the arts.

That must be the message behind all the festivals preparations for Earth Day

FILES Cyrgian Arcerio leads a lineup of classical performers in Earth Day concert, Singers for "One Music As Earthday Presentation"

525,600 minutes with Ogie Juliano

He literally went out in a blaze of love, courtesy of the grateful theater community he had loved to bits

By Gibbs Cadiz

THEY SAID GOODbye to Ogie Juliano Lim Wednesday at the Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero Theater in UP Diliman. As far as necrological services went, it was the most joyous I'd ever attended. It couldn't be helped, I guess. The whole theater community was remembering an actor, director, costume designer and teacher who lived large, whose presence mainped itself on any space, whose wide girth was matched only by the apparent immensity of his heart.

That, at least, was the impression you came away with after seeing practically the creme de la creme of Philippine theater come to pay their respects to a colleague felled by kidney disease at 56 years.

Juliano died last April 7, Black Saturday. In four days, his many friends in the academe and the industry managed to put together a tribute that only theater people could really pull off: a memorial service that was by turns edifying, touching, tongue-in-cheek, campy, raw and emotional—qualities that Juliano himself, quite a showman in his prime ("No one beat you as a drag queen," Dulaang UP's Tony Mabesa recalled), convinced with unlimited effort.

As an associate professor at UP's Department of Speech Communication and Theater Arts, Juliano worked alongside theater luminaries like Ms. Mabesa, Ateneo dean, Behn Cervantes, Issay Tupaz, Chris Millado, and the late National Artist for Theater Rolando Tinio, as well as numerous students and theater workers who learned their stage beatings from him.

His directorial works included "Sweet Charity," "Sweet Latanya," "Mary Poppy of Manila," "Kundiman Sisters," "The Braggart Soldier," and the favorite-filename trilogy I was fortunate enough to catch in January last year.

As an actor, he appeared with Pete Truyo's Philippine Tanghalang Pilipino, Dulaang Peloton, Gantimpala Theater, even Repertory Philippines. He was Fagaso in "The Barber of Seville," Groot in "Scrapioca," "the Duke in "Othello," Fikir Ledenberg in "Nunal" and Judge Tiger Brown in "The Threepenny Opera," Lord Buckingham in "Richard III," Pete Teschmacher in "The Enemy of the People"—roles that his larger-than-life silhouette inhabited with flair and panache, as his extravagant wardrobe attested with much fondness.

Endless possibilities

But it was as a costume designer that Juliano received the greatest plaudits from his co-workers. He found the varnish and flavors of fabric, the endless possibilities of color and not shaped on an actor's form, to spotlight characters and settings.

Eugene Domingo, dressed in sophisticated lawn's sage, rose up in a skit not only Juliano's irreverent mental penchant for throwing coffee mugs at stubborn actors, but also his extraordinary gift for fashioning who failed to carry the national dress with proper dignity.

"Magagalit si Tita Cuaderno!" he'd admonish them, referring to the legendary Coaching Senior, the late doyenne of the Metropolitan Theater.

His first acting job with Bea, as Issay Tupaz's costumer-turned-lover, was "The Threepenny Opera," where he played a prince outside a horse.

"Sabi niya sa akin, di siya happy sa costume niya, so ilang pwede daw niyal gawin ng parusa. Sabi ko, e sige. Tapos, sabi niya pag na-re ang kabayo ko sa mat, di na yun kabayo ang hanahan, sarvana ka! At di na rin siya prinsipe noong Offstage!

Behn Cervantes noted, in his own remembrance: "I suspect that sweetness and cheekiness is heaven, and even St. Peter himself, see dressed differently now that Ogie has joined their celestial ensemble." And despite Juliano's girth, he said, "Ogie was light on his feet and graceful in repetoire."

Issay Tupaz came a sublime eulogy to Artist Juan, read—yes, acted—by Nars Gangoza, Irma Adlawan and Frances Makil-Ignacio.

"Look here me in the theater with me Fine," said Juan. "We don't ask the date or the year, we say, 'Sa 'Merry Widow' nangari' Juan." Of Juliano, he pronounced, by way of Gangoza's ringing cry, "I cannot think of you as smaller than life!" before ending with, "Thank you, thank you. See you as he was meant to mean."

Defying gravity

Juliano's thesis production for costume design with Dulaang UP was an Ibsen twinbill, "Hedda Gabler" and "A Doll's House." That was 24 years ago, with Mabesa as both director and thesis adviser. Now Mabesa spoke gravely, affectionately of Juliano's easygoing spirit, tapping his wings by standing before the cue that held his ashes and symbolically scattering the spirit of the talent on the stage of the Guerrero Theater, his home for a quarter of a century.

"Goodnight, sweet prince," he said, quoting "Hamlet." "And Flights of angels sing thee to thy rest."

Then, to the strains of Betty Buckley singing a medley of "If Ever I Would Leave You" and "My Funny Valentine," Juliano appeared on screen in jeans shorts and a dainty cute, defying the laws of gravity as he pirouetted, floated and launched into a breathtaking split. Free Willy, eat less, leaping to his freedom.

The crowd hooted, laughed, applauded; there was no one to shush "Bawal" at Juliano's silliness now. The cameras zoomed closer on for minutes, until the Wonder Marvel from the speakers, chanting the haunting numbers of "Seasons of Love" ("How do you measure, measure a year? In twenty-five thousand minutes, five hundred twenty-five thousand moments so dear..."). The whole auditorium rocked with sustained cheers as Mr. Juliano's son was carried by his friends out of the theater.

"Measure your life, measure your life in love," so went the anthem from "Rent." Last Wednesday, Ogie Juliano literally went out in a blaze of love, courtesy of the grateful theater community he had loved to bits.

This article first appeared in the author's blog (www.gibbscadiz.com). E-mail him at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph

OGIE Juliano, 1951-2007

TRIBUTE to a beloved mentor

PART of the large crowd that attended the memorial service at the Guerrero Theater, among them Issay Tupaz, Bernardo Bernardo and Dulaang UP founding artists director Tony Mabesa (right, back to camera).

Farewell, dear friend

By Dennis Marasigan
Contributor

DEAR OGIE,

Yes, I was there at the Guerrero Theater for your curtain call. I wouldn't have missed it. After all, how long have we known each other?

The people who congregate during the service—I mean, performance—all praised you for your contribution to Philippine theater, particularly your work in UP where you had practically lived your entire life. They praised you for your work as an actor, director and costume designer, and deservedly so. That was something we all knew.

Some spoke of your temper and tantrums, we seldom knew, but hardly anyone spoke about your soft side. They didn't know you, but I knew. Dexie.

It was also at the Guerrero Theater that we first met for the first UP Summer Theater Arts Workshop in 1976. You had just graduated from UPH, I had just finished that year in college. You had just turned 17. I was a few months from being 16. We instantly gravitated to wheel each other, perhaps because we were among the younger ones in the group that included Chris Millado, Jeanie Gil, Ine Elizalde, Joey Stanley, Ilene Esguerra, Cesar Sanchez, and Jil as to others (we were on the younger—Mars Dizon was in her 11).

By the time the next party was held at the end of summer in Margot Audiology house, I suppose we could already recognize each other as friends.

First freshman

When the Theater Arts Program opened the following year, you were officially the First Freshman to enroll in it. In the first Introduction to Theater Arts class with Behn Cervantes, we formed committees with Chris Millado, Mars Dizon, Betty Mae Piccio, Jorge Ledesma, Ben Ramos and Nicolas Dioscampo. Newsman-ly, we all got involved in the Dulaang UP productions that year. Rene Villanueva's "Barbo," directed by Jessie Infantion, was the season opener, so, do you remember? Standing Josel played the lead and Gus, Chris, and Betty Mae were the stage managers.

We would go on to work in productions together in UP with Antoni Jean, Tony Mabesa, Behn Cervantes, Cris Martido, and later with Ariel Lavandero and Mea Cortes. Sometimes we would both be actors. Later we would work as fellow designers, you doing costumes, me doing lights.

We also considered ourselves lucky that most of our other contemporaries let getting the opportunity to work with Tessie Tiplino, Caridad Apostol Bueno, Nita and Repertory Philippines, at a time when evening in other productions companies was still an

Do you remember the "Lantern" tour we had in the Visayas? How, one day when we were on the beach, you prodded me to form an organization of speech and theater majors? We actually hatched the plan right there on the beach, and we both talked to Chito Asa who became our first recruit. We did get to host the UP Speech and Theater Association (or UP Speech) and we were all proud. But not only did it get recognized by the department and the college, we got cited as one of the university's outstanding organizations in our second year!

But what people remember is how vehemently you refused to be one of the officers of Speech. Not by any chance. You even made yourself absent during the elections just to make sure you were not elected. But elected you were, you were Spector's mother. We still laugh this day when we recall how you led us into that dress parade under the stairs and clowned it up prime and dirt just to see could have a time in Belma Hall.

And what about the projects you were willingly shared your time and family experiences with? The coffee maker you donated for a week in the 80 Wash Avenue one and huge week? And your house! How many Christmas parties and induction rites did it host during that time? I've lost count of the many times I ended up sleeping in your living room couch!

Vocal protestations

We acted in each other's plays, despite your vocal protestations that I would never consent to scratch on an actor. Over the years, we spent much time in and out of class together, anywhere. How many nights did we share reminiscing on stuff in Arnold's Bar in Kamuning? Or the overnights here in Forest Cottage and in Santa Cruise along with other friends? And the Lantern Parades that we joined with you constantly everybody?

You opened us to and supervise the costumes in my thesis production, El Filibusterismo in 1980. Remember how we had to scrounge for costumes in the 1970s? Even the Philippine Constabulary uniforms in your costumed squads about the problems I had rented you, but you said I know that the garrulling only marked the cars and crowns you had not only for the production but, more importantly for your friend.

Irma Dalisay and was almost absent in Most one during the Guerrero service that you we'd never know whether, as you said, I really married the wrong person. Of course it was a pro-down you always rewarded her every other person I was becoming embarrassed. Despite that, you were the only wedding sponsor among our friends who actually made it to our wedding in Xavier in Ilano-pre-Gonzaga-Road days.

Ogie, I wish I had said that much later that you almost did not make it back in time for the performance of "Mami/Gado" later that evening. People still remember how you swapped your clothes on from the CCP caravan all the way to Batanes as the house had opened by the time you got there!

You also agreed to serve as godfather to Iza and Mica at their baptism. In fact, whenever time and the kids said I needed anything from you, we knew we would always get it—after your pro-on promotions, of course. We took it for granted that you were a friend, and that you'd always be there.

But you had other plans, obviously. And because I did believe that you'd be around forever, I didn't have the chance to thank you enough for all that you were and had been in my life. I'm sorry my mother still keeps photos of the weekend we spent in Ugu.

I know God apologies will not be able to make up for the time we could still have shared together. But I'd like to think that the selfless person that you were, you wouldn't have made a fuss about it.

Ogie, Irma and I are grieving. Philippine theater has lost a true artist. We've lost a true friend. We've not said it often enough, but we love you dearly.

Farewell.

Dennis Marasigan is artistic director of Tanghalang Pilipino.

JULIANO as Lord Buckingham in a Dulaang UP production of "Richard III," with Frances Makil-Ignacio as Queen Margaret

US film festival invites entries from women filmmakers

WOMEN FILMMAKERS AND media artists will have five days to shine in DC when the National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA) presents its first ever film and media arts festival.

On Sept. 23-Sept. 30, the NMWA's 20th anniversary Festival of Film and Media Arts will highlight the talents of outstanding contemporary women filmmakers who are creating works that are both intellectually innovative and socially relevant.

NMWA Film Programmer KJ Mohr says, "For the past 20 years, the National Museum of Women in the Arts has been dedicated to celebrating the highest creative achievements of women artists. With this festival we can bring recognition to women who are creating provocative and innovative films and videos that exploit the media in exciting new ways."

The museum is currently accepting submissions encompassing film, video, media performance, and installations of all lengths and genres from around the world. The early bird submission deadline is June 1 and the late submission deadline is July 15.

International entries are due June 8 and entry is free for work from other countries. Entry forms are available at www.nmwa.org, or e-mail film_festival@nmwa.org.

Call for entries to songwriting tilt on women's rights

THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CULTURE and the Arts (NCCA) and the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCR-FW) call on amateur composers all over the country to join the "Cedaw Song Writing Competition."

NCCA Executive Director Cecilia Isolde Alvarez says the competition aims to raise awareness on the "Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women," or the Cedaw, through music.

"Music is part of everyday life and of any celebration. By using the medium of music, we are hoping that say 10 more years hence, people will understand that part of our country's commitment is to address different women's issues such as discrimination, exploitation and trafficking, among others, not just in compliance with Cedaw but with the Millennium Development Goal No. 3 which is to promote gender equality and empowerment of women."

Cedaw was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979. It entered into force on September 3, 1981 and is often described as the international bill of rights for women. It defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action. The Philippines signed the convention on July 31, 1980 and ratified it on August 5, 1981. As of December 2006, 186 countries have ratified the convention.

The song should be in line with the theme "Cedaw ng Saray: Rangyaan ng Kababaihan," should not exceed three minutes, can be sung solo or duet with guitar, keyboard or any indigenous musical instruments as accompaniment, can be written in Filipino, English or a combination of both languages (Taglish), must not have been borrowed and adapted from any locally or internationally produced song, and must be recorded on compact disc or cassette tape accompanied by a lyric sheet.

The winner will receive P50,000 and a trophy. The finalists will also be given cash prizes and trophies on the awarding ceremonies slated in June this year.

The winning song will be judged based on the following criteria: music that includes melody, rhythm, chord harmony and originality and the lyrics' content and relevance.

Entry forms can be downloaded from www.ncca.gov.ph. Deadline for submission of entries is on or before April 30 at NCCA in-cement in Intramuros, Manila, NCRFW in San Miguel, Manila and the Department of Health Central and Provincial offices.

Call 5257530.

THE Bayanihan

Bayanihan holds Sayaw workshop

BAYANIHAN, THE NATIONAL DANCE COMPANY of the Philippines, is holding the Sayaw Workshop, the yearly summer dance workshop.

The Sayaw Workshop is being undertaken by Bayanihan to collaborate with the Philippine Women's University Center for Culture, Arts and Music, Cultural Center of the Philippines and the Iberoder Alliance in Valenzuela Bonifacio.

The two-week intensive workshop of five special lessons on street jazz, folk and Latin dances. Registration fee per lesson is P3,000. This year's workshop is open to children and adults aged 3 to 34. Venues of the workshop will be at the PWU Comedy Room, the Hall and the PWU Ballet room.

A full show at the CCP Main Theater will highlight the culminating activity of the workshop on April 22 at 3 p.m. Call 5246089.

SINGING sessions during the press launch of "Ave Maria: An Earthday Presentation"

Fill planet earth ...

From page A1

2007 by nongovernment and government organizations. It will be a heady mixture of choral egg music and religious, with the universal healing prayer "Ave Maria," meticulously orchestrated, serving as a canvas to both Mother Mary and Mother Earth.

On Earth Day itself, April 22, at the Quezon City Memorial Circle, the renowned Ateneo Bonifacio Concert Choir led by Fernando composer Arsiy A. Undag will set the tone for the celebration with a rendition of the rousing "Ave Sanctis" (Our Father), by Undag himself serving as the invocation, to be followed by a close song and the patriotic "Magsasaka Tayong."

The guest of honor is Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr., with Environmental Secretary Angelo T. Reyes delivering the State of Philippine Environment Address. There will be an Earth Day Networking Eco-Eco Photo Exhibit.

As a curtain-raiser, two days before the event, on April 20, an unprecedented concert featuring close to a hundred singers and orchestrists will be staged at the Quirino Grandstand in Manila. Many versions of the "Ave Maria" through the centuries, by foreign and Filipino composers, will be represented.

More than 30 versions of the "Ave Maria" will be sung in 20 languages, including major Philippine languages. There will also be replicas of epic ecological wonders, like the Tubbataha Reef and the Chinese whale shark.

Gounod, Verdi

The concert will open with Gounod's "Ave Maria" and close with Verdi's version of the prayer, accompanied by the thrilling ensemble of Dona de Leon, with the audience lighting the candles. The pianists here are Jhem Raul Imbuo and Mary Anne Supina of the UST Conservatory of Music.

The performers are (repeated Feliz Anselmo, Alexei Cana, Karla Calderon, Jaime Dames, Lyra Hellenio, Camille Lopez, Jennifer Ty, Deeda Ibarreta and Alexis Edrolin; tenors represent Agnes Barreda, Ana Feleo, Jeanelle Holdan, Ella Rosario, Nemes Espina and Joanna Uy; Oriental Pearls: Antonio, Nelio Molina, Juan Miguel Lucelan, Randy Ulango and Jonah Ong; Baritones) Montes Acoplas, Noel Acosta, Mario Guevarra, Ira Santos, and Miguel Lucelan, II; and Jaime Alex Ibarang; Frolo Gutierrez, Jun Jacamilla, Nonoy Solano, Jr. Bonny Rodrigo.

The instrumentalists are Jaspher Lourdes Gregorio, cellist Renato Lucas, violinist Alfonso Beltjuna, and guitarist Lenny Dimmville, with Harold Galang conducting.

The musical music is written by Henry Tejano, and produced by Interior Dramatics of Mother Earth Philippines.

On April 22, after the opening prayers at Quezon City, the scene shifts to the Manila Cathedral, with a Mass magnificent at 12 noon, to pray for the children of the planet, with Emeritus Cardinal Rosales as the main celebrant.

Three acclaimed boys choirs will sing: Gilyeros Boys Choir, Las Piñas Boys Choir, and the Tiples de Santo Domingo. Tenor Jun Belarmino will resume the Padma. Among the guests will be more than a thousand children from Bandary Mountain, a hundred of them Five Commissioners.

The festivities will be capped that day by a 7 p.m. environmental concert by competitive folksinger Joey Ayala and other artists, commercial touch-in, with honorary Boys as the "green guys," back in the Quezon City Memorial Circle."

Earth Day 2007 will be celebrated by 140 countries.

UST writing fellows named

THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS Creative Writing Center and Studies (USTCWCC) has announced that 10 fellows have been accepted to the 8th UST-CWCS National Writers' Workshop on April 23-28.

The fellows are: Mela Jasmine Bautista, Bonnie Bernardo, Jerome Co, Monique Francisco and Ely Ann Pedero (Fiction in English or Filipino); Lysette Garcia, Anne Regine Go, Ronald Pupag and Julie Lovely Pinpin (poetry in English or Filipino); Maria Pauline Apelado, Catherine Sison, Ma. Georgina Verdadero and Ana Beatriz Valenzuela (non-fiction in English).

The panel of critics is composed of the UST-CWCS staff which include Ophelia Alcantara-Dimalanta (director); Gelo Bautista (senior associate for poetry); Carlomar Arcangel Daoana and Marcelino Sulit (junior associates for poetry). For this year, they will be joined by guest panelists who are Outstanding established writers.

Museum of Bienvenido Santos established

THE WORKS OF CELEBRATED FILIPINO literary luminaries, Bienvenido N. Santos have found a home in the recently inaugurated Bienvenido N. Santos Literary Museum inside the DLSU-M Library.

The museum gathers a rare collection of Santos' memorabilia—photographs, video clips, awards, original manuscripts, awards, manuscripts and published works.

The venue also features materials containing interesting anecdotes about the late Dr.Santos, as well as significant things that helped Santos come up with his renowned works, such as the typewriter Santos has served from another writer, Carlos Bulosan.

The Bienvenido N. Santos Literary Museum has alternating exhibits exploring different aspects of his ingenuity as a literary genius. Lectures, workshops and other activities are also being held to further encode the RNS experience of both students and visitors.

LIFESTYLE

Helen Quach conducts MSO in benefit concert

STORY ON PAGE D3

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Age of Enlightenment Foundation of the Philippines, Inc.

Insights on Proper Eye Care

Diabetes Information Service from Abbott International

People with diabetes have a higher risk of developing eye problems, also known as diabetic eye disease, which can lead to severe vision problems and even blindness.

For a better understanding of proper eye care, here's a short discussion of about the eye works.

Light first enters the cornea, the clear front part of the eye, and travels through the anterior chamber filled with aqueous humor, a watery fluid behind the cornea. Light then passes through the pupil, or opening in the iris or the colored part of the eye, and then goes through the lens for further focusing. The light exits another fluid-filled chamber filled with the vitreous humor, a jelly-like substance that helps the back of the eye in the retina.

One part of the retina, the macula, is responsible for the sharpness of the details. This tiny area of sensitive tissue is called the macula. Like a camera film, the macula is the part that records the images and transmits it to the optic nerve for processing.

Diabetes and Eye Problems

Several factors may affect blood sugar, and most people have a particular pattern of how their blood sugar and diabetes can affect the risk of developing eye problems.

People with diabetes, for example, generally tend to develop glaucoma (high pressure in the eye) and cataracts (clouding of the lens) at an earlier age than those without diabetes.

Glaucoma occurs when pressure builds up in the eye and causes damage to the nerve that connects the eye to the brain. Cataracts occur when proteins in the lens become clumped together, causing the blood vessels from carry tissue in the lens and the light more difficult. Known to eventually cause blindness if not treated.

Blurred vision can be caused by high blood sugar levels. When blood sugar levels are high, the lens can swell, causing blurred vision. Fortunately, this condition is usually temporary.

Diabetic retinopathy can be a serious problem for people with diabetes. It occurs when there is swelling or leakage of the blood vessels in the retina. The light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye. Diabetic retinopathy is also known as a much better way than you see it, or an eye of diabetes.

Diabetic retinopathy is a genuine concern for people with diabetes. It can be detected and treated early with regular eye exams.

How to Avoid Eye Problems

To maintain the proper health and condition of the eyes, here are a few tips.

First, blood sugar levels must always be kept under control. Maintaining blood sugar within the normal range can help lower the risk of developing retinopathy and other eye problems. A good eye examination by an eye doctor can also help delay the progress of eye problems, and even prevent blindness.

Second, blood pressure should be constantly monitored. High blood pressure can make eye problems worse.

Third, the smoking habit must be stopped because this only makes the problem worse.

Fourth, a diabetic patient should see an eye doctor at least once a year.

Fourth, a diabetic patient should see an eye professional and discuss scheduled dilated eye exams. Only optometrists and ophthalmologists can detect the signs of eye problems, and recommend the appropriate treatment.

When to See an Eye Care Professional

After every visit to the opening optometrist, a dilated examination with an eye care professional is advised.

- Blurry vision
- Trouble in reading signs or recognizing people
- Halos around lights
- Permanent red-ening of the eyes
- Pressure in the eye
- Seeing spots or floating images
- Inability to see straight lines

Finally, here are recommendations from the American Diabetes Association to help people with diabetes maintain healthy eyesight:

- Those between the ages of 10 and 20 years who have had diabetes for at least three years should have an annual dilated eye exam
- Those who are 20 years and over are required to have an annual dilated eye exam. Many experts recommend this be repeated if eye problems are detected.
- Those who are pregnant should have a dilated eye exam.
- Any change in vision requires immediate attention by an eye care professional.

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Journeys of the indomitable Helen Quach

By Grace Shangkuan Gan
Contributor

The conductor says her world has become larger than her music: 'When one has reached a certain peak, there are other lessons to be learned'

MANILA Symphony Orchestra president Carlyn Manning, Helen Quach, Grace Ann and Regina Dee of Inner Peace Foundation

EIGHTY, FIERY, FURIOUS and dubbed "Lady Tycoon of the podium," Helen Quach had been at the top of her game conducting orchestras all over the world—until she chose to slow things down. Now a serene lady, she shares with me how she has become someone else who thinks, feels and lives differently, adding quite nonchalantly: "Music is just music."

I attended my first Helen Quach concert in Manila in my early teens. Her distinctive, high-slit chongsam and confident walk to the podium dominated by tuxedos were received with applause by the orchestra.

So she conducted the Philippine national anthem to a rousing, vigorous tempo, I whispered to my sister the "La-pasog-Bayang" above was used to be told to.

In our family, her name is our bogeyladies. "Kih-lee Tairng," a tiered she respect reserved for "super women." We stooped to the ground lacks to watch her as often as she gave concerts in town.

QUACH before a huge photo of her as a younger and very passionate conductor

Music journey

Helen Quach (Kuo Mei Chen), born to Fujian of Chinese parents, played the piano because it made her parents happy. At 10 she migrated to Australia and at 19 graduated from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. His next year saw her to her debut as the first female conductor of Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

In 1965, she won first prize in the prestigious Dimitri Mitropulos International Competition in New York and was appointed assistant conductor to Leonard Bernstein at the New York Philharmonic.

It was not easy for her, as Asians and females, to be among international orchestra conductors. Yet with determination and hard work, she asked to be understood, and with her gifts of great musicality and understanding of music, plus her "temperament," she found her place.

A music treasure of Asia, Daley was known for her fathers sense—whether attacking a melody or a choreography. She is also distinguished by a set of huge accommodating brilliance eyes framed by her signature dark black lash loosening in rhythm.

She was much sought after to conduct the top orchestras in Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Philippines, Singapore, Australia, as well as in Germany and Norway.

She founded the National Philharmonic Orchestra in Sydney Children's Orchestra of NSW and Taipei Philharmonic. She was resident conductor of Taiwan Symphony Orchestra.

Soul journey

Still, in the middle of all her success, something went wrong. She suffered electric shock in an accident that damaged her organs. She was also diagnosed with cancer of the breast.

Not having assumed that surgery would take out the cancer completely, she decided she needed to heal for herself and, thus, retired away from the music arena. At her vacation time of one of body, mind-death experiences, she could see more clearly the physical strength to listen to music, much less to study or conduct.

She sought healing in the Zen spirit and exercises of chanting "Ito" by tracing ecumenism: where the physical centre, she found relief from pain.

Music now includes evening's "vibration of love and gratitude." Her new-found spirituality also involves her in causes for animal rights and care for the environment.

Journeys to Manila

Today 16 years after her hibernation, Helen Quach scattergun for her 80th concert program in Manila to conduct the Manila Symphony Orchestra (MSO) for the centennial celebration of St. Scholastica's College on April 22 and 28.

The program for both concerts consists of Beethoven's "Leonore Overture" No. 3 in C Major; Grieg's Piano Concerto in A Minor, with pianist Cristine Cuenco; and Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5 in E Minor. She will conduct the overture and symphony without scores.

Local legend has it that a piano teacher keeps a souvenir of one of Quach's lessons that she broke in her furious temper during a rehearsal.

She is no stranger in our music halls and in our own television, having conducted MSO many times before with soloists Reginald Asal, Nena Villanueva, Raul Sunico and Gil Rabaya when she still wrestle with tendinitis.

She also remembers the concert at the Cultural Center of the Philippines inauguration as the invitation of then First Lady Imelda Marcos. At another time, her plane landed amid the ashes spewed by Mt. Pinatubo.

She appreciates the Filipinos not only for their creativity and passion in music but also for "loving [people] not so much for what they can achieve but just who they are," and for enjoying life as it is or a solitary pace.

Lessons

A soloist, more contented person she has become in spite of her career. Helen maximizes the same optimism and passion she has had all her life. Except this time, she expands her passion to include a world larger than music.

She believes "music is a good class, plan for young people, and it is good to always do something in the best of your ability."

However, while in the past she had always been driven, wanting to prove herself in her career, music does not hold that story any longer for her.

While her expectations and standards for music excellence have not been compromised, she knows when "one has reached a certain peak, there are other lessons to be learned." She now enjoys conducting more than anything.

But first, let us hear the drums roll again for "Lapasog Bayang"!

E-mail the author at grace@ibon.org

Helen Quach conducts MSO in benefit concert

By Amante C. Hilo
Contributor

HELEN Quach

CONDUCTOR HELEN QUACH returns to Manila after an absence of 16 years to conduct the Manila Symphony Orchestra in a benefit concert earmarked for the MSO Instrument Fund.

Pianist Cristine Ceniza, who made her orchestral debut with the MSO as winner of the MSO Young Soloists Competition, is featured soloist.

Performances are slated April 20 at St. Scholastica's College's St. Cecilia's Hall at 4 p.m. and April 21 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo (Main Theater) at 8 p.m.

The program consists of Beethoven's "Leonora" Overture's No. 3 in C Major, Op. 72b; Grieg's Piano Concerto in A Minor, Op. 16; and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36.

Spearheading the fund drive is Carlye Manning, president of the Manila Symphony Society (MSS).

In an informal press launch recently at her residence in Wack Wack, Makati, Manning said the fund-raiser has personal significance for the MSO which has contributed immensely in shaping the cultural life of the country she called home.

Founded in 1956 by Alexander Lippay, the MSO was dubbed Asia's Premiere Orchestra. Manning acted as head the MSO and raised funds for the orchestra decades ago.

Today she is at it again, doing the same task with equal vigor in mounting MSO's need for new instruments.

Conductor Quach and pianist Ceniza strike a strong tandem in sharing blessings with maestro. Quach had gloriously mentored the MSO several times in the past and most confidently orchestrate for the Sydney Opera House and television. She is hailed as "The Lady Tyrant of the Podium" and "Queen of the Baton."

Ceniza has made an auspicious comeback since 1996, gaining critical acclaim for her brilliant performances. She is dubbed "Pianist Pianist" and "Prince of the Piano."

The performances of Grieg's piano concerto is done in commemoration of the 100th death anniversary of the composer.

A highlight of the press launch was the performance of the MSO String Quartet composed of Joseph Caballero, violin 1; Jose Maria Gonzales, violin 2; Ray Conol Concepcion, viola; and Jerry Graham Gonzales, cello.

For ticket inquiries for the April 22 performances, call MSO at 7916131; or St. Scholastica's College at 5264860.

For the April 20 performances, call the CCP Box Office, 8321125; Ticketworld, 8913999; and SMDC 7702121.

Correction: Anna Teresa Alcala-de Pajarito's name and her winning entry "Bong Bong Pakimong" were inadvertently not included in my article "Book of Filipino choral works launched" (April 9). She was also the conductor of the featured photo of the CSI Chorale, not professor Fidel Calalang of the UST Singers.

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

Shared memories and wonders if twelve with the world's smallest specimen of her knowledge

MAD SCIENCE

Madz in transition

From page D4

injections and programming. He takes into consideration the interests of both the audience and the singers themselves. Before the conductor can enjoy what the choir does, the singers, first of all, should enjoy the pieces they are doing. It's the conductor's job to lead after the all-around development of the singers, and this includes knowledge and experience of various choral literatures.

Auditions can also be tough at times. Having drawn an inspiring Manila singer is still something I find difficult to do. Then, once they passed, they start working with people of different characters and temperaments. I keep this here-minded especially when making decisions.

The conductor also looks at how each member can be conscious to the present circumstances of the society the choir is part of. I think that, for a concert to be a memorable and meaningful one, it has to have some connection to our lives.

Q: How does the choir stay in good shape?

A: Regular rehearsals. The singers take good care of their voices because they know that they cannot enjoy a performance if they are not feeling well. And since there are usually a few singers in the Madz, each one feels responsible for the sound of the whole group. It matters if one singer is missing or not entirely in top shape. This is also why we maintain a period of summer. There are always available singers who can fill in whenever needed.

Q: What kind of sound does the choir always try to achieve?

A: It would be the same sound preference Wennaseus had always maintained, a free and relaxed sound but at the same time resonant and flexible.

Q: How does the Madz prepare for competitions?

A: Hard work. Feeling good about ourselves inspires us to even work harder. We do know that it doesn't stop to winning competitions. As professor Wennaseus always said, competitions are not the end; they are just means for us to see how well we reach our ends.

Q: How do you see the Madz in the next 10 years?

A: I would like to see the Madz leading and helping other choirs reach the level in which it is in now. There are a lot of choirs in the country that have that potential. There are a lot of conductors, also, with the right tools and skills, we lead their choirs to reach high grounds. It is a dream of professor Wennaseus to see the whole country singing...a singing Philippines. And it is up to us to carry out projects and activities to fulfill this dream.

For tickets to the April 13 and 20 engagements of the Philippine Madrigal Singers with the Philippine Philharmonic at the CCP Main Theater, call 832-4967/8713.

Here and there

Russian pianist Sergei Ilatovetsev, who will perform in Manila May 7, says being curious about the psychological meaning of the pieces a pianist interprets is very important in coming up with a good performance.

"In Chopin I am even more obsessive over the meaning of the pieces I play. I train out the technical requirements so I never feel 'fight' with the piano but rather do what I want to do. Of course, I try to guess the composer's intentions, and the more psychologically interesting my interpretations of those intentions are, the better the performance."

Ilatovetsev says he comes from a music-loving family. His parents are professional pianists. His mother is the head of the piano department of the Moscow Conservatory. He has a pianist sister, Anna Ilatovetsev. And some of his musician friends have already performed in the Philippines.

For remaining good seats for the May 7 performance of Ilatovetsev at Philamlife Theater, call 8907630, 8972971 or 0906-3134470.

* * *

The whole month of June, Piers Park Dee, seats will be devoted to the Philippine High School for the Arts Alumni in celebration of the school's Pearl Jubilee.

On June 1, Bernardo and Gemma Bacalso play Ivaire compositions with pianist Rawald Galang. June 8 is the recital of soprano Ethel Mosi. June 15 will feature violinist Isidora Bermudez with the Bantog Chamber Ensemble; and on June 22, pianist Oliver Sulonga—a summa cum laude graduate of Cum Outward—will close the Piers Park celebrations.

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Choco Caramel Mousse

Whatever the occasion, It's more beautiful with a Red Ribbon

PHILIPPINE Madrigal Singers with Mark Anthony Carpio

Madz in transition

By Pablo A. Tariman
Lifestyle

PIANIST Sergey Kasparov

The world-renowned Philippine Madrigal Singers has a new conductor in Mark Anthony Carpio

FRIDAY LAST WEEK, THE PHILIPPINE Madrigal Singers performed with the Philippine Philharmonic in an enthusiastic rendering of Ifor Bowman's Symphony.

The Madz, as the choir is popularly known, will have another performance on April 28 called "A Wonderful World." For this engagement, you might see the new choir conductor, Mark Anthony Carpio, who took over the place of professor Andrea O. Veneracion, founder of the Madz and now Sherwood Artist for Music.

Q: Was your being a Madz member a big advantage in taking over professor Veneracion's position?

A: From the beginning I thought that succeeding Ma'am Od (Veneracion) would be a very big responsibility. I knew that expectations would be great and reactions would come. And, indeed, they came, sometimes in big waves. But Ma'am Od had prepared me for that. She told me there would always be people who would not be pleased with what we did. Another matter involved the singers. Many of them were my peers, some of them, were my closest friends. It was natural that I would also get criticisms from them. But my years as a member of the Madz have taught me how to deal with different personalities. So I took everything in stride, accepting all criticisms humbly.

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Whatever the occasion, It's more beautiful with a Red Ribbon

LIFESTYLE

Books and roses at Instituto Cervantes

It will be open house at the Spanish cultural embassy in its new home in Ermita on April 23 when it marks International Day of the Book with a fair of books, films, food, dances, and fun

(STORY ON PAGE E)

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YOUNG readers

INSTITUTO Cervantes director José Rodríguez holds some of the 4,000 brand-new books to be sold at the International Book Day

Books and roses at Instituto Cervantes

THE INSTITUTO CERVANTES IN MANILA will hold the Day of Book and Roses on April 23 in connection with World Book Day.

Although not celebrated in the Philippines, the International Day of the Book is an important event in several European countries, and Instituto Cervantes aims to establish the date as a tradition in the Manila cultural calendar.

The International Day of The Book is a yearly event organized every April 23 to promote reading. The celebration is ignited in Catalonia, Spain, where on St. George's day, males and females traditionally exchange a rose for the gift of a book. This tradition inspired a Spanish delegation to propose to the Unesco a resolution supporting the proclamation of April 23 of each year as "World Day of the Book." It was unanimously adopted in 1995 and celebrated ever since.

April 23 was proposed as it is a symbolic date in world literature. It was on this same day in the year 1616 that literary legends Miguel de Cervantes, William Shakespeare and Inca Garcilaso de la Vega died.

In celebration of the special occasion, Instituto Cervantes will organize on April 23, from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m., a whole-day Open House with many cultural events.

Events include book-signing by well-known Filipino authors such as National Artist F. Sionil Jose, Gregorio Brillantes, Bienvenido Lumbera and Jessica Zafra.

There will also be jazz shows, concerts, dance performances, film showings, Spanish wine and cheese tasting, live salsa and Latin dance classes, etc.

There will be poetry reading and an on-the-spot photo contest.

The day will begin with a book fair where Instituto Cervantes will offer more than 4,000 brand-new books at token prices.

The fair will also include books by popular Filipino publishing firms like Anvil and leading bookstores like Fully Booked, Goodwill and A. Bellwether Bookstore at 20 percent off.

Following the tradition during the Day of the Book in Spain, a rose will be given to every book lover. "We are preparing a great fiesta celebrating the joy of reading. The book lovers, it's going to be a must, a not-to-be-missed event," José Rodríguez, Instituto Cervantes' director, proudly declares.

Loaded with the Instituto Cervantes publishing will be organized.

Visitors will also get the chance to attend a free Spanish class for beginners. A 20 percent discount awaits new students who enroll on this day.

Grant Books on the Screen will screen movies based on original literary materials. The schedule:

— 2 p.m., "La Colmena," 1982, directed by Mario Camus. Based on the novel of the same title by Nobel laureate Camilo José Cela, it shows Madrid in 1942. Winner of the Golden Bear in the Berlin Film Festival.

— 6 p.m., "El Mundo," 2008, directed by Manuel Palacios. Based on the famous play, "El Método Gronholm," the film explores the dark inner workings of the corporate world. While anti-globalization demonstrators rally in Madrid, candidates compete for a single high level position at a multinational corporation. The humiliation they are willing to endure so to fulfill or others just to get the jobs chilling to witness. Winner of two Goya Awards.

Kids will also have the chance to enjoy three Spanish movies for children (at 11 a.m. and at 1:30 and 4:30 p.m.).

To cap off the day, Instituto Cervantes will hold the Dia del Libro Party with a Latin band, Spanish food and lots of fun.

The Instituto Cervantes is at 631 Aduna St., Intramuros, Manila; call 5264482 to 86.

INSTITUTO Cervantes director José Rodríguez holds some of the 4,000 brand-new books to be sold at the International Book Day

Spanish cultural grant program marks 10th year

MADRID, THE PHILIPPINES AND the former Spanish territories in the Pacific Islands share a common legacy, which has been continually nurtured through the years. The shared heritage opens windows for mutual growth and understanding, through exhibitions and cooperation.

At the helm of these efforts is the Ministry of Culture of Spain, which started the Spanish Programs for Cultural Cooperation (SPCC) in 1997. The program started a grant program for Philippine universities in 1997, although it was only formally launched in June 15, 1998.

Three years later, four countries from the Pacific Islands formally joined the program: the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Republic of Palau and Federated States of Micronesia.

Today, these countries share a common desire for mutual cooperation and understanding, embodied in the program's theme, "Shared x Common Passion."

The program gives financial grants and support to university projects in the humanities, the social sciences and the arts, initiated by scholars and artists who are truly experts in the field of the Spanish culture as well as the shared heritage and shared future between Spain and the participating countries.

The collaboration has not only spurred the publication of classic and modern Spanish texts in translation, but also original research work as well, such as "Clase Spanish Influences on Early Classes in the Philippines" by Nick Deocampo; "El Rizal of Dr. Jesus Arboleda; A Legacy of Philippine Literature in Spanish" by Leandro Castrillo Brillantes; "Historias, cuentos de Filipinas" by Trinidad R. Pardo de Tavera; and "Cinco de Noviembre Bicol" by Jose E. Javellana, S.J. with illustrations by Fidel Majarucon and Ismael A. Mesa.

The program covers a wide variety of projects and collaborations, and may include contemporary Spain modernism, democratization, migration and ethnic diversity, social services, and regional organizations, in conjunction studies on Spain and the Philippines, or the Pacific Islands; Spanish Language; dialectics, borrowings; the Performing Arts; Visual Arts, Design and the Cinematography; Preservation of Cultural Heritage.

Recently, the Instituto Cervantes presented SPCC's plans for the grant year 2007.

The Instituto Cervantes hosted its own "Fope" Bulaqueo is the coordinator of the Spanish Program for Cultural Cooperation.

FRANCISCO Colayco and Nina Lim-Yuson are co-authors.

Unique book teaches Pinoy kids how to save

THE NURSERY RHYME, "THE KING IS IN the counting house counting out his money, the queen is in the parlor eating bread and honey..." should give people an idea that a long time ago, money and counting already figured in the minds of people creating rhymes for children.

Western developer, financial advisor and business author Francisco J. Colayco has collaborated with Learning Center and Resource Institute founder Nina Lim Yuson in a practical book on how Filipino children can be taught to save money.

The book is "Money for Kids, Para Sa Talagang Mo, a Parents/Teacher Guide to Financial Literacy for Kids," and it is available at National Bookstore and Power Books.

The book contains eight stories to illustrate the "Eight Money Guidelines for Kids." The first rule is to "Know what money is and what you can do when you have money." Everything else flows from this lesson.

The most important thing children have to learn, according to Colayco and Yuson, is to "know the difference between Needs and Wants."

Needs are things you must have in order to live and wants are things you would like to have but can live without. The eighth rule teaches the best lesson of all, "Sharing because it brings more blessings."

Colayco continues the collaboration with Eisner, the translator of his three best-selling books "Wealth Within Your Reach" (2001 National Book Award, business and economics), "Making Your Money Work" (2005 National Book Awards, nominee, business and economics), and the "Pera Talagang Pambuhay."

His parents were World War II hero Manuel Colayco, Jr. and well-loved educator Clemencia Jovero Colayco, UST professor emeritus.

"Nanay is an author herself, writing a Day Care curriculum for the Department of Social Welfare and Development and a math workbook. In 1992, she received the Ten Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service (TOWNS) award for her pioneering work in early childhood education. She is one of the daughters of much-respected educator, the late Dr. Estefania Aldaba-Lim, and the sister of media personality Charlie Lanuza.

Call 6374732 or 0917 4037333 or e-mail info@visionfoundation.com.

Learning French the fun way

ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE DESMARILLES launching a "revolutionary series" of new French classes this summer.

According to Alliance Française director Olivier Domingo, the classes emphasize "oral skills" and emphasize "real life communication."

"If starting a language used to be a painful experience with a classical approach: many teacher focusing on grammar and written exercises, today, [the Alliance Française de Manille offers an entirely new approach focusing on real life communication," Domingo said.

"Whether for children starting from age 4 or for adults, the philosophy will be the same: enjoy and learn."

To provide greater convenience, the French classes will be held at the Alliance Française in Makati (209 Nicanor Garcia St. formerly Bepza), the 6th St. and at the Instituto Cervantes, the Spanish cultural center, in Manila (835 Pablo Ocampo St., Ermita).

Alliance Française deputy director Anna Hermosisima-Asunción claims will specifically address the language needs of young people.

"As scientific studies have proven, a child acquire a second language before the age of 13 is likely to speak it like a native," Hermosisima said. "That's why for this summer Alliance Française de Manille offers children those different classes perfectly adapted to their age."

OLIVIER Domingo

LOUIS Thevenin

The three classes are:

• "Les oisseaux" (for tiniest). 3-5 years old. With Tonio le Matou, a multisensorial method, the children will learn French through exploring the five senses (touch, smell, sight, taste and sound). The course is perfectly adapted for preteaching and pre-writing children.

• "Les p'tits monsieurs" (for little monsieurs). 8-10 years old. The idea at this method is a revolutionary communication approach with various and unique activities and productions every time. The child will learn French through his games and actions such as "listen and draw," "listen and repeat," and "listen and act."

• "Les Ados" (the teenagers). 11-13 years old. Learners will get to touch with France's culture, fashion, music and art while participating the language. They will even get the chance to attend French exhibits of the French Spring festival.

At the end of the session, the children will be given a certificate and parents will be provided an evaluation report detailing their child's progress.

Adult classes

The Alliance Française de Manille is also launching a new series of intensive French language sessions, Monday to Thursday, three hours per day.

The series will employ a new method, alter Ego. From the very first session, the teacher will speak in the session in French and the students are asked to speak in French as well.

Students will be able to understand a conversation between French speakers in a cocktail, participate in a television show, speak about their own everyday life and write in French in a business and administrative.

Far from transforming students into specialists of French grammar, the program seeks to give them the linguistic tools necessary to go through everyday life in France.

"Indeed, language is not grammar, phonology and vocabulary alone but a set of communicative abilities which can only be properly learned within communicative situations," Domingo said. "Even children, as the latest studies research has pointed out, do not learn their mother tongue by simple repetition and detailed grammatical explanations, they construct it alone."

And with the French classes to be conducted in two venues, as Alliance Française and Instituto Cervantes, there will be no excuse not to join a French class this summer.

Call 8817-4586/89, 8817-9581 or 894-1943.

Thomas Aquinas is alive and kicking in godless Diliman, thank you

The Angelic Doctor's teaching exalts reason, dignity and authentic freedom

By Nicolo F. Bernardo
Contributor

"FIDELIS AD ÆQUOS" and "scholastici" do rhyme, after all.

Scholasticism (the medieval/Catholic philosophy) is alive and well in the so-called "godless" University of the Philippines (Diliman), with its students and faculty putting over St. Thomas Aquinas' voluminous "Summa" over the "Little Red Book."

The credit goes to the Opus Dei Thomistic of the Singlore Center near the campus. The center, a sort of women's hospice, seems to be benefiting as "the Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence" over the "Little Red Book."

"Marketers of the world, unite!" says Karl Marx. "Workers of God, unite!" say the workers of Singlore.

Dar Dei-immanuse is the Lisa Ruth Ocampo, author of the "The Dignity of the Thinking Person: A Philosophical Reflection on the Human Person" (UST Publishing House, 2006, 112 pages, no ISBN but 000-1007 for the UST Library).

Ocampo obtained her Bachelor of Arts—cum laude and thesis valedictorian in Philosophy from UP.

While UP's Philosophy department was formed by scholar Hieronimo Pascual, academic freedom permits attendees to graduate from UP Ocampo, who after taking literature and Pascual's degrees in Philosophy from Rome's Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, is back in UP to teach scholasticism as an alternative philosophy of life.

The thinking animal

The book is really Ocampo's doctoral dissertation, and it answers the question of human dignity and reason, after the disciples of Aquinas, the godfather of Catholic philosophy.

Jordan de Giacomo Mirror of Inclusive de Olandia says the book is "arguably the most vital book on Aquinas published in the Philippines." (He says does apparently without apologies to the Dominicans and "Boniface of UST" who published Ocampo's book in the first place. Ocampo's point is to be university members at the Pontifical University.)

To solve contemporary man's identity crisis and loss of self-worth, Ocampo suggests a re-reading of Aquinas' reflection on man as a "rational [thinking] animal," which is rooted on classical Greek and Latin philosophy. She evaluates Aquinas' conclusions such as Nietzsche's Ressentiment, John Dewey's Lawrence Dewan, Alasdair MacIntyre and other Anglo-Saxon philosophers.

"In the Godot to Christ, Or Lewis' The Abolition of Man," Ocampo says, "we find the disturbing image of 'men without chests' who are as a loss in grappling the problem of their 'self-alienation.' These 'men without chests' are trying to figure out what their misplaced identity consists in. Lewis' portrayal is a powerful indictment against opposition that limits and dulls the question of human nature unanswered."

But also for from thinking man as a definitive answer, Aquinas' teaching, Ocampo says, "does not reduce and purpose to all other non-thinkable being.

Far from being archaic, Thomism has touches of existentialism, historical humanism and personalism. By answering man's reason, Aquinas affirms man's subjective capacity to think for and by himself, to live for his sake, to self-care (freedom), to self-love his person-qualities, to self-actual uniqueness, to live it differently."

Ocampo appeals to man's individual conscience. She quotes Cicero: "Reason can never persuade one duty are capable of acting on strictly personal maxims, which cannot be made into general laws valid for all human beings."

And while Aquinas is credited the Angelic Doctor, he was far from likening man to angelic thinkers. Aquinas opted to define human as intelligent animal rather than as an "immortal spirit," whose value lies heavy on this soul.

The soul is not the main or dominant element. Soul and body is. Whereas God alone is Mr. Perfect, He is no mere as machine. He made him the apex of his own perfection.

UP's scholastics

Readers familiar with neoscholastics will find the book engaging...a real treasure into high achievements. Ocampo, who hails from country of Thomists, labored through her advising Greek and Latin terminologies and texts.

Her interest in the works of Flannery O'Connor, Sir Chesterton, Sir Eliot, John Henry Newman and Karol Wojtyla shows that the man one day do as "Doctor Ecclesiae," a Universal Doctor and a scholastic.

In the words of her thesis director, Stephen Brock, Ocampo "has the good luck of becoming poetry as a kind of an opera for one, which she seems to share... This wisdom goes by the name metaphysics."

Ocampo's study primarily tackles the debates on reductionism, existentialism, human rights, liberalism and philosophical anthropology. Positive responses from the country's top universities prove that Thomism is a tempting gospel truth to intellectual elites struggling.

Through her work, Thomism finds new voice from a layperson, a Filipina and an alumna of "that godless university" Ocampo offers her students a new way to think about themselves, to act solutions to dignity, reason and freedom.

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Mr. & Ms. marks 31st anniversary

MR. & MS. CELEBRATES ITS 31ST YEAR this April with a special issue celebrating life.

Learn a thing or two about life from the stories of true survivors. Be motivated to live to the moment with cancer survivor and Chocolate Lover founder chef Annie Carmona-Lim. Find inspiration from the passion of Steve Tamayo of Tamayo's Catering Services and Emma Ilan-Riggod of Resting in Kalinhod, who both had to beat the odds and overcome hardships before becoming the successful businesspersons.

Find out what celebrities have to say about their own lives: From Vilma Santos to Robin Padilla and Dolphy. They have all graced the pages of Mr. & Ms. in recent years and are back with their bits of wisdom and other interesting facts.

If you feel you need to de-stress your daily routine, Mariel S. Francisco offers ways to simplify everyday living. Her article includes soap-to-follow advice like learning to meditate, fixing your personal trainer and taking a walk instead, and turning off the TV.

If you are always at a loss when making sense or love decisions, learn from Chai Alejandro's long-line guide. See what the stars say about your compatibility with your partner here.

Jaime Licauco gives us insights on how to nourish not just the physical aspect of our being, but also the emotional, mental and spiritual aspects. Feed the body with food, the mind with meditation and the spirit with prayer, he says.

Juliet Silvestre puts the spotlight on a couple who spend time defending, protecting and teaching children with intellectual disabilities. Meanwhile, Rory Quijano writes about a welcome intervention, a dig-ital hearing aid for schools fold'em.

Read the story of former Social Welfare Secretary Esteban Abiada-Lim's last days, and find peace in how she was able to send last messages to her children even though she was in a coma.

Mr. & Ms. also attempts to peek into the near future as Mafe Mayne talks about the upcoming municipal elections, while Jamal Akbar reviews the Oscar-winning documentary Fast Al Core, "An Inconvenient Truth."

"Spiderman 3" stars Tobey Maguire and Bruce Evans are featured in this month's cover as interviewed by Rolly-wood writer, Jayne Negadas.

Available now at newsstands nationwide. Visit www.mrandmsmagazine.com.

Pride Of Place
Augusto Villalon

SUMMER VACATIONS IN Manila were the yearly highlights of my Cebuano childhood. It was usually smooth sailing to Manila, until around midpoint in the journey our ship hooked the dreaded rough currents swirling around the Romblon islands.

It was not so our time, for everything refreshed when the waters calmed still again after the dreaded islands were finally behind us. The men were to look forward to was sailing into Manila Bay, beholding the great city on the horizon, and watching the vista expand as our ship approached its berth at the harbor.

Romblon was the transition point...the geographical marker where my childhood passages to the big City turned unpleasant... After many years I never had the opportunity to give Romblon any serious thought, not frequent then that I had become, did it ever cross my mind to consider that modern technology surely maintains ships as a more cost fuel (Note days than in my days.

Inland Caravan, a dynamic travel agency specializing in country-based adventure and cultural tourism, got me to think of

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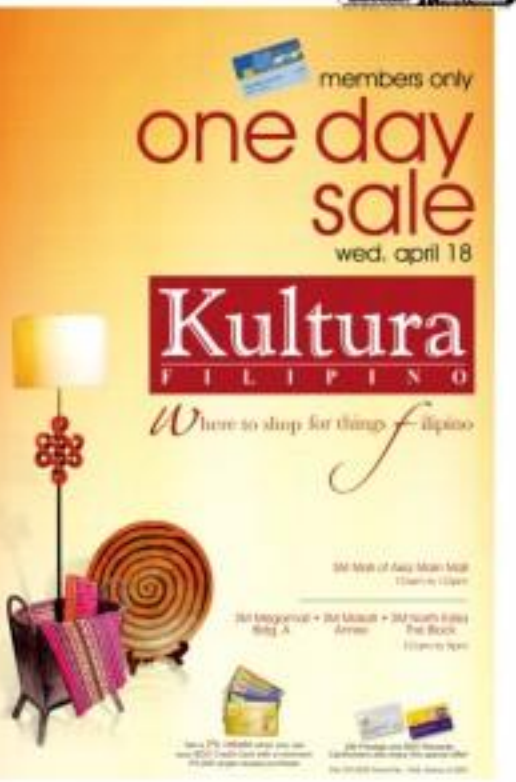

Art on 'Papier'

BY Lydia Velasco

"PAPEL" by Karina Bolinao

"MOVIMIENTO" by Federico Aguilar Alcuaz

GALERIE FRANCESCA ROLL opens "Papier Cherubs on Paper" — on April 19. The show features outstanding works on paper by Jeremiel Santos, Mario Parial, Federico Aguilar Alcuaz, Lydia Velasco, Carlo Magno and Karina Bolinao.

Some believe that paper has its own charm. "The colors I use come out brighter on paper."

Parial enjoys paper precisely because it is a different medium from canvas altogether. "It's an always a creative, interesting challenge when they are asked to make artworks of different media."

"I get a different effect when I use paper compared to canvas," Velasco says.

Magno notes that "I end up using different materials altogether when I make my original works on paper instead of canvas."

Collectors usually express concern that paper may not last as long as works on canvas. But Santos says, "We are tested to do is to resist ourselves that Chinese scroll paintings made several years ago are still very much around and have survived the travails of time and weather."

Galerie Francesca is at Unit 2B-2C, Prestige Point at 2132, Makati (in front of Makati Medical Center). Call 869-8695 or e-mail artist_pro@hotmail.com. The show runs until May 5.

BY Jeremiel Santos

"JESTER with Horse," by Mario Parial

If you think about it

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Enjoy the luxury of a sedan and the versatility of an SUV with the Chevrolet Optra Wagon. It has a 1.6 DOHC, E-Tec II 4 cylinder engine that delivers increased performance. The Optra Wagon's 60:40 split folding rear backseat allows more than enough room, even for your furniture. It's sleek, sophisticated and most of all, saves you money. The Chevrolet Optra Wagon is the lowest-priced wagon you can buy, for only P862,000 (manual transmission).

CHEVROLET

Romblon adventure

Romblon again.

Inland Islands adventure, in its adventure package to Romblon, hops from island to island in three days and two nights.

Adventure is the operative word here. Expect no luxury, but be rewarded with a lot of discovery.

An overnight boat trip, not a cruise ship, leaving Manila late in the afternoon gets you to Romblon (the capital) as dawn first softens the morning.

The capital is really a small port town with vestiges of a few Spanish colonial houses, rare examples of wooden post-World War II houses of the type now vanishing in favor of nondescript concrete in other parts of the country, and generic new structures.

One of the amazing things about Romblon is that the Spanish colonizers bestowed it with two forts, San Andres and Santiago Hill, reportedly built in the 1640s, and also said to have underground passages leading to the coast.

Fascination with passages

A national fascination with secret passages persists. Many Spanish colonial buildings are said to have secret underground passages connecting from churches or government buildings to jails, outright confinement, or eventually, to flee to the sea too distant southern or hills for quick exits.

The fascination takes on colorful proportions. Branching out from undisclosed locations is a lot of Spanish-era conversion, some say are tunnels that run underneath nearly a Philippine town plaza or barrow beneath colonial cobbled streets to allegedly ancient priests' rooms.

In Romblon, as in many other places in the country, the oldest remain passages from part of local lore passed from one generation to the next. They are now known by all but not nearly well.

There is no word that hotel accommodations on the islands will never have any room attached to them. And as you know what to expect, the simple family-style hostels or homestay locations are straightforward places that are clean and provide a good roof over your heads, to what else do you need?

This is adventure tourism, after all.

The boat from Manila proceeds to Sibuyan island where new coordinates, members of the local community, meet guests at the pier in Cajidiocan and transfer them to San Fernando, the largest of the three towns on the island.

The private Aloguinsan entertainment establishes the urban dweller, who's suddenly surrounded by unspoiled nature. The steep cliffs of tall, densely forested mountain ranges rise at the center of the island. Mountain streams develop into a network of sparkling rivers that flow around the area through tropical jungle foliage.

A reconnaissance trek is made to Binay falls deep in the forested mountains. The falls are locked to Cantingas River, said to be the cleanest inland body of water in the Philippines.

On the second day of the tour, there's an outrigger dance date in the powdery-white sand beaches of symbolized Cresta de Gallo (Rooster Comb) island, where one can have a day of swimming and snorkeling. The day affords the visitor to discover marine life in the coral reefs that surround the island.

In keeping with its mission of establishing sustainable cultural and adventure tourism, Island Cruising programs are based on community participation. Locals, trained to host tourism activities, are the primary beneficiaries of tourism which is expected to generate additional income for the community.

Island Cruising offers an extensive menu of heritage and adventure tours in the most surprising, unexpected locations in the Philippines. For inquiries, reservations, or bookings, call 890.9418, 811.6760, 0920-9048646, or e-mail inquiry@islandcruises.com.

Feedback is welcome at pride.pleasi@gmail.com

CANTINGAS River is ranked as the cleanest inland body of water in the Philippines.

Make way for the Aliwan Fiesta

STREET DANCING WILL fill 10 the streets of Manila this summer as Aliwan Fiesta 2007, the so-called mother of all festivals, opens on its 10th year April 26-28, along Roxas Boulevard.

Aliwan Fiesta '07, organized by the Manila Broadcasting Company (MBC), together with the cities of Manila and Pasay and the Cultural Center of the Philippines, brings together thousands of the country's finest costumes, water performers, and homegrown beauties hand-picked to compete in the dance parade competition, float competition and the much-awaited Reyna ng Aliwan beauty pageant.

Both local and foreign tourists have witnessed a 20-in-one festival that showcases dancers from different Philippine festivals—from the popular Sinulog, Dinagyang, and Panagbenga, to the new ones like the Alikabuk festival of Bongao, Lepto, and Pamulinawen festival of Sorsogon, Pavia).

Faisal Musa, artistic director of Sandayong Cultural Dance Group of the Kapag-A Sagayan festival of Sultan Bedaut, Sharif Kabunsuan, hails Aliwan Fiesta for promoting the best of what their region has to offer. "The Kapag-A Sagayan is a celebration of thanksgiving through the Magindanaoan dance sagayan."

The dance depicts episodes in Maranao history and the adventures of mythical heroes, particularly great battles and fight scenes, in a series of graceful motions, the movements producing a swirl of gold, red, maroon, green, violet and blue.

To make it to Aliwan Fiesta, dancers undergo a stringent process for qualification, Mesud reveals. They undergo several elimination cycles during various local festivals to determine the 100 dancers, 60 musicians, 60 support staff and 25 float staff that would represent Sharif Kabunsuan. The performers then undergo weekly rehearsals, which increase in frequency in the weeks leading up to Aliwan Fiesta.

Bienvenido, the defending champions, the Governor of the Sinulog festival contingent, are determined to hold on to the crown.

Honoring the Sto. Niño, the Sinulog festival showcases a dance depicting the movement of the water deity in Cebuano through backward, forward movements. Traditionally, the dance consists of two steps forward and one step backward, done to the sound of the drums.

Herman Tiongco, choreographer of the Sinulog festival contingent, says they are putting on an entirely different routine this year. "While we focused on charming the jury, this year's routine highlights fishing. In it we have all-new dance steps and different formations."

The grand-prize winner will get P1 million. The second and third winners will get P600,000 and P200,000, respectively. The top 10 finishers will each get P50,000.

But more than the P1 million in cash prizes, the contingents are after the honor they will get for being named as the best of the best.

Other festivals joining Aliwan Fiesta 2007 are Pahiyas festival of Lucena City; Panagbenga of Baguio City; Sambali Lagyanta of Cagayan; Bacon of Echague, Isabela; Dinamulag of Hagonoy, Bulacan; Peñafrancia of Naga City; Bicol; Ibalong of Catanduanes; Queano; Pit of Sorsogon City; Dinagyang of Iloilo City (Hargarano and Kalibrayan contingents); Sinbayloy of Bago City; Negros Occidental; Alfamora of Hilongos, Leyte; Pasbuknga of Borongan, Eastern Samar; Pamfarasi of Pagadian City, Zamboanga (formerly of Zamboanga City, Kalilangan of Cotabato City; Padaiya-Padang of Panabo, Davao del Sur; Mallorad of South Upi, Maguindanao; and Kalibrad of Shimanggas, Maguindanao.

A grand parade along Roxas Boulevard will kick off the cultural-arts activities on April 28, one day before Pasay, Quirino, Caraballo and ending in front of Rizal City, CCP Complex.

Other attractions of the three-day affair include a grand fireworks display; huge banners showcasing native products and culinary delights from all participating regions; a Fiesta games competition; and a concert featuring the Philippines' hottest entertainers, top show bands and the most popular artists.

SINULOG contingent reenacts the Santo Niño.

PASALAMAT contingent dances in thanksgiving for a bountiful seafood harvest.

DINAGYANG contingent dances in origin, dancing to the beat of rhythmic drums.

HOMONHON dancers in Tubigon group dance to the rhythm of bamboo drums.

MARIKINA Shoe Festival dancers in a spirited frolicking

"POLITIKA ng Laman, Lumbas Diaro," by Rueben Habulan

"OPLAN Tumba" (detail), by Pablo Baen Santos

Baen Santos, Dekotavo, and Habulan join forces to reaffirm their credentials as the country's fiercest practitioners of Social Realism

Socially committed troika

By Gino Dumlaoan
Cover Buster

PABLO BAEN SANTOS, Arcipus Dekotavo and Rolando Habulan are among the seminal figures of Social Realism in the country. Since the 1970s, when they first emerged on the art scene, they have been staunchly committed to the left cause.

As if to reaffirm their credentials, they have reunited in a show organized by Pinade Art Fair and curated by José Tence Ruiz, himself a second-generation left stalwart.

Called "3 Angguhs," the exhibit surveys the country's present socio-political condition, more than 20 years after martial law was imposed by Marcos. As the chosen images show, the plight of the ordinary has, indeed, taken a turn for the worse; from the brutal rituals of the '70s to the large-scale diaspora that serves as their only hope for salvation.

And the applause is heat artfelicited by Dekotavo's "Diaspora," an 11 ft x 16 ft oil painting, showing a large assembly of departing overseas workers, their faces hidden and only their backs showing, with their luggage of dreams on their worn-out hats in destination over the rainbow.

Dekotavo is an astute yet realist who captures the soul of his subject with the steel eloquence of gestures, half-empty stares and almost deadpan expressions. As in the past, when he painted the subject of contemporary workers in the urban landscape, Dekotavo explores the intensity of his figures, delving deep into the psyche of a people held captive by the oppressive system.

The blocking of these characters is devoid of sentimentality or obsession, and the large-scale treatment makes their condition even more appalling.

Baen Santos, the most senior of the three, and also the most fiercely committed, has not slackened a bit in his political stance. Confronting the most explosive local issues today, ostensibly extra-judicial killings, the artist captures the mood and fury of the nation's claim to international notoriety.

Charged images

In "Oplan Tumba," a monumental triptych measuring 10 ft x 36 ft, the mural is charged with the disturbing images of many innocent folk felled by lateral assassin's lead. The national trauma is evoked by narrative potential (cradling their babies to asleep, orphaned children crying in chorus, lifeless bodies sprawled all over the canvas).

The flesh-and-blood conflagration of political killings takes a more ghastly turn in the face of heinous idiosyncratic treatment of a subject that would have lent itself to senseless sensational ness.

He eschews canvassing the characters as nothing but hapless victims, but presents the other side to these killings, comparing them to the slaying of the innocent and the ultimate victory that the righteous must strive to attain.

The artist's trusted brass, jerky lines, coupled with his brochure approach in painting them overlapping scenes of slaughter and struggle, result in a limit ess dramatic evening of intense, temporarily instigated by a military officer who is still on the loose and has the gall to run for an elective post.

Habulan, who has spent more time playing mentor to emerging artists, has opted to explore his roots and the middle class spat by to urgent national issues.

In "Politika ng Laman, Lumbas Diaro," a 6 ft x 8 ft oil painting, he serves in on faces of ordinary folk in a gallery of characters. Capturing them in gray and sensual shades, the artist seems to be appalled by the display of midlife crisis seeking otherwise symbolic areas that in the end become the subject of sadness purely jokes and TV sitcoms.

In "Magkaugkas," Habulan shows a senior couple in front of their bicycle, looking straight into the viewer. This must be the artist's tribute to his parents and to old age, the subjects facing an inevitable life even in their retirement years.

E-mail author at pdevmail@yahoo.com

"DIASPORA" by Arcipus Dekotavo

LIFESTYLE

Shrine of Peñafrancia needs help

CROWN carvings flanking the altar cover passageways to stops traversing the back of the image for devotees who touch the hem of its robe.

RACKEN rides are scattered throughout the church floor.

Text and photos by Walter Ang
Contributor

BARELY 20 YEARS HAVE passed since its last renovations but the Shrine of Our Lady of Peñafrancia in Naga City is once again in dire need of repairs.

"When it rains outside," says Hilda Sabal Irigue, "it rains inside."

Sabalbigue, chair of the shrine's parent council, explains that the church's internal wooden supports and trusses are being eaten away by termites, causing structural weaknesses. "Half the year is rainy season and it is difficult to maintain cleanliness because the floors become wet and muddy. The chandeliers measure as high as 5 meters [because of how far down] they are from the ceiling."

Further aggravating has been inflicted by numerous typhoons, the latest of which were Milenyo and Reming last year. With not much to go on, the council has tapped heritage experts under the aegis of the Most Rev Leonardo de Legazpi, DD/D, the archbishop of Caceres, and Fr Gerardo Fernandez, the shrine's parish priest.

Fundraising

The council's vice chair Imee Ocampo says: "We would like to fast track the repairs, but are desperately need funds."

The council is full of women like Sabalbigue and Ocampo who have been working to hold raffles and contests, selling commemorative items, and generally drumming up awareness.

"Every little effort helps but we're not a very big group," says Ocampo. "We'd like to get at least the structural repairs done so that parishioners can have a comfortable and safe place to worship. Later on, we hope to raise enough funds to continue with the interior repairs."

While the stone façade of the church stands strong, it's missing a balcony. Also, the painted mural on the ceiling is checkerboard with holes, broken tiles, gappy the floor, and the stained-glass windows covered with plastic trash bags.

MURALS on the ceiling are filled with holes from rotting wood.

AUTOHAR of the shrine features chandeliers donated in the late 1800s.

Heritage

The shrine's current state belies its rich history and lore. Originally made of cogon and bamboo, it was built in the early 1700s by Miguel de Cobarrubias, vicar general of Nueva Caceres (Naga).

The Dominican missionary had pledged to build a church to house the Virgin of Peñafrancia and was finally pressured to do so when Tagalogs and Ilocos requested a church for their needs. They wanted a church near the river so that they could wash in and use the water from without having to ask the authorities.

Devotion to the Virgin of Peñafrancia originated in Spain, where a Peñafrancan named Simon Vela, following what he claimed was a divine voice, found an old image of the Virgin in a small Spanish village. A miracle related to the administrators of the church established the devotion to the Lady of Peñafrancia in the Philippines.

When Cobarrubias commissioned a wooden statue of the Virgin, the sculptor smeared blood to color it, as a dog was sacrificed. When the animal's carcass was cast to the river, Cobarrubias was attributed with saying: "The Virgin will prove her first miracle to Nueva Caceres. She will bring back to life that innocent animal that gave the blood for her."

The dog was supposed to have started swimming and running back up to its master's house.

The church was eventually replaced with a stone structure and has undergone modifications since. Its ornate façade donated by the local Chinese community was stripped down and made to look more austere in the late 1870s along with an expansion of the church's length. Chandeliers were donated by Spanish families in the late 1800s.

Malice and miracles

The shrine has had its share of mystery as well. In 1981, the statue of the Virgin disappeared from the altar. It reappeared a year later in Manila in five pieces.

After conflicts ruling the authenticity of the image, it was returned to Naga amid a rolling typhoon. It is said that the skies cleared and the storm about closing the one-hour celebratory Mass but became stormy again after the Mass ended.

When major renovations were done in the late '90s, the mural was discovered to have been painted on galvanized iron sheets. The sheets were so rusted that attempts to peel them off only crumbled them to dust.

Despite the loss of some undocumented details like the mural's original design (created by artisans from Pampanga), accounts from that particular renovation have a trove of little miracles.

The chandeliers were discovered to be hanging from completely rotted wood that would have given up at any moment. Demolitions would come at inopportune times when the coffers ran dry and suppliers needed to be paid. Materials needed for construction appeared mysteriously and totally unaccounted for.

Fit for a queen

The stories from the last major renovation is, quite the council ladies in their endeavor to bring the shrine back to its former glory.

"We're trying to reach out to Filipinos throughout the country and abroad to help us generate the money by way of any countless. Even they might be able to share," says Sabalbigue.

To this end, the council has been holding brainstorming sessions to come up with more activities to raise money. They've been brushing up on their online history so that they can relate more engaging stories to pique people's interests.

Exploratory talks are underway to stage a fundraising dance concert later this year, featuring homegrown talents and with the possibility of an international participant.

"The connection is a manifestation of our devotion to Ina, the Bicolanos of Bicolandia. No matter where they are, many Bicolanos cannot become very forgiveness for the feast of Our Lady while pilgrims and devotees return and visit her throughout the year," says Ocampo. "We are simply responding to the parishioners' spiritual well-being and to have a home befitting a Queen for Our Lady."

E-mail: inq.shrine.renovation@yahoo.com.ph or call (0918) 4728404.

LIBRENI of Our Lady of Peñafrancia

ORNATELY designed wooden chairs grace the altar's entrance and gold-leaf details.

VISUAL ARTS

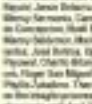
Prints, lecture-demo at Yellow Door

The Philippine Association of Printmakers will open "Kotbit" (cut above the rest), an exhibition of fine prints on April 19, 6 p.m., at Yellow Door Gallery (Roman Tiled Mall, Rockwell, Makati). Works are exhibit includes those by featured artists J. Orlando Nocomo, Armando Bernoy, as well as by Virgilio Aviado, Ed Delarmo, Fred Nabor, Fred Peter-Perez, Jesse Sadel, Bedie Ferrado Cabrera, Ana Flores, Andrea Mateo, Rhoda Nadal, Christopher Nicolas Jesus Bolanos Serrano Temporosa, Benny Sermonia, Camilla de la Rosa, Pepsol, an Concepcion, Noel Villareal, Ned Dolendo-an, Manny Balderrama, Mario Parial, Evelyn Cabrera, Jose Bonifacio, Gloria Nicolas, Ruben Poquiz, Cherie Bitanga, Susan Fabricante, Hyper San Miguel, Rolex Barbadora and Phyllis Zabalbino. There will be a lecture demo on the intaglio process on April 23, 2 p.m. The show runs until April 29. Call (0905) 4604584 or visit www.facebook/philippineprintmakers.net.

2 shows at Kaida

Kaida Art Gallery (2/F, G/F Bldg., 1272 Kalayaan Ave., Makati) will host back-to-back group exhibits April 20-May 12: "Katutubo" features works by Cristino Jacinto, Florita Montenegro and Arturo Palicte. The related works by Leonardo Valdellon, Art Gallery's Grey Nash, an artists' space adjacent to the gallery's main exhibition space.

"DUMALIDAY" III, by Archimay Pabonia



"TWILIGHT" III, by Jon Gresola

"Landscapes" features Arthur Lucio, Gloria Villanueva, Jim Orencia and Mike Portal. Each artist will present works on landscapes. For further information, call 8184277 or 0918-5851755.

Summer workshops at MET

The Metropolitan Museum of Manila presents its 2007 Summer Art Workshops. The schedule: April 30-May 4, Basic Photography by Mario Hernandez; Federation of Philippine Photographers foundation; May 7-11, Basic Watercolor Painting; May 14-18, Art Therapy and Visualization by Wilfredo Wong; Gloria Ilao; May 21-25, Basic Printmaking; Jerome Mario Escobar. To register, or for more info, call 5268188, 5268189, or e-mail info@metmuseum.ph. Metropolitan Museum of Manila is at Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Manila. It is open Monday-Saturday 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

"MY LOVELY Animals," by Mario Fernandez

Ars Pacis' at West

West Gallery (46 West Avenue, QC) presents "Ars Pacis," a group exhibit by Mario Fernandez, Eva Lugay, Popo San Pascual and Christina Sotiangkhy-Ramos. The title literally means "altars of peace," "romantic comic animals," "Philippine-tattoo Lugay-inside and a light box where visitors can explore intimate images concealed in mysterious, illuminated strips of white cardboard — many published and unpublished," a press release says. Call Fernandez's cousin Jaime Sotiangkhy at 0917-5315681 for more info.

"WEB" II, by Popo San Pascual

"SPACE Ship," by Christina Quisumbing

Bundo draws inspiration from watching her grandmother's house by morphing the ordinary into extraordinary assemblages. Call 4115251.

CONCEPCION AT DUSMILA

Rome-based Filipino artist Renato Concepcion presents "Homage to Michelangelo" until April 28 at Galleria Dusmila (210 Loring St., Pasay City). The exhibit is sponsored by the Kalikasan Embassy. Ambassador Rubens Reis Pedida says the exhibit is a significant tribute of the beautiful relationship of the Italians and the Filipinos. Opening the exhibit are National Commission on Culture and the Arts executive director Cecilia Alfonso, Swiss Envoy Spouse chairman Thelma Cunanan, Ambassador Fedele, former senator Heherson Alvarez, the artist, and columnist Belinda Cunanan. Call 831 [illegible].

Estrada at Podium

"METAMORPHOSIS," by Tito Pacquiao Estrada

Non-representational artist Tito Pacquiao Estrada presents a one-man show, "Organ," April 17-23 at the Podium Lounge, Podium Mall, Ortigas Center. Background words, Estrada answers a question many have: Organic? A style he has pioneered and is now known for. "Metamorphosis" will benefit the Kalayaan Community Cultural Foundation in South Cotabato which is focused on preserving the cultural diversity of Mindanao.

Poblong Anading at Ateneo

"Between Impressions," a video-installation produced by Poblong Anading, opens April 18 at Ateneo Art Gallery and runs until April 24. Anading, who is from Cebu, received the 2006 Ateneo Art Awards along with Mideo Cruz and Maya Muñoz. Cruz received it in the 2006 Ateneo Art Gallery Sydney Studio Residency Grant. "Between Interventions" is his response to his visit to Australia in November last year, using four video channels with each video projected on each side of the gallery walls. With a continuous barrage of random images from his personal video library drawn from decades' timeline, Anading aims to confront, displace and erode the camera's purpose of recording and delineating memory and experience. Nominations for the 2007 Ateneo Art Awards will be accepted May 1-31. Nomination forms may be downloaded at http://gallery.ateneo.edu or picked up at Rm. 208 AS Bldg. Call 4266000 or e-mail ateneoartawards@ateneo.edu. The Ateneo Art Gallery is in the Rizal Library, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, QC.

Multimedia workshop

The University of the Philippines Film Institute (UPFI) presents Multimedia Workshop, a series of short-term, specialized courses on film, power or all images and the various aspects of film and audio-visual production. One workshop is Black and White Photography, April 16-27, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at 10 UPFI A-1014 or 109 Vitas Bldg. Ana Maria de Guzman, an award-winning filmmaker and a noted visual artist/photographer, will facilitate. Diretso director of the UP Film Institute. Call 9282122 or e-mail upfi_workshops@yahoo.com.ph.

Talk on Muslim art at Lopez

The Lopez Memorial Museum and the Metrobank Foundation of the Philippines will host a lecture by Abraham Galidi of the Department of Architecture of University of the Philippines on "Philippine Muslim Art: Context, Aesthetics and Some Issues," April 25, 2-4 p.m. The discussion is free but seats are limited; reservations are necessary. Call 6373311 or 4910888.

Group show at Crucible

The Crucible Gallery (4/F Bldg. A, 3895 Leonard Siadong Drive, Bangkal, Makati) presents "Sacred Old Girls" by Aden Santiago. Bjorn Gallup, Kim Gerard Nebrang Sana. Using surreal imagery we witness the reconstruction of the female psyche in the most episodes of reality, the artists herein set with a common concern, to escape from the hostile city-scape of Manila's factories that still survey commemorates that once nationally and historically wrapped up. Call 8166881.

Exhibit of Southeast Asian trade wares

Ayala Museum will hold a guided gallery tour of the exhibit "The Rebecca T. Tinsay-Ongsiako Collection of Chinese and Southeast Asian Trade Wares" by guest curator Rita Lee, April 28, 10 a.m. Visit www.ayalamuseum.com.

Chabet at Finale

Finale Art Gallery and West Gallery (4/F SM Megamall) jointly present "Two Limited Paintings," the annual show of conceptual master Roberto Chabet, on view until April 11. Both galleries, side-by-side with each other, feature Chabet's recent historical installations composed of his drums, plywood, canon lights and photos. The slight difference lies in the curatorial angle: Finale has "a heart's content reading" while West has "a heart's content reading art." As mirrors of each other, the galleries also put this controversial attitude of the artist, assuming the space for the purely conceptual. Rationalizing no way unconscious, this show hangs on the nuanced thread of articulation, loosely escaping the artist's obsessive grasp. Call 6343491 or visit www.finalearts.com.

"FLOATING (Harbor Scene)," by Julio Acosta (left); "Bohol Chimp," by Sam Penaso

"BEST Thoughts," by Margaret Rodriguez

Journeys in abstractions

JULIE AUSTEN, SAMUEL PINARD and Margaret Rodriguez mount the exhibit "Wanderlust: Travels Within and Without" April 24-May 20 at Le Soufflé Restaurant (17/F, Tuscany Corp).

Austria and Rodriguez are products of the University of Santo Tomas while Pinard — from the Technological University of the Philippines.

Austria focuses on explorations based on his travels around Southeast Asia.

Pinard goes back to his roots in Iloilo, and he presents the sights of his native province in striking abstraction.

Rodriguez tackles destinations within. Her paintings are loosely influenced by Native Abaft's tripartite work.

Opening cocktails will be on April 24, 7-10 p.m. Call 8917 3333 ext. 376.

"DNA BLUE Curves," by Rodrigo

"KAWAAS"

Images of the corporal and the spiritual

By Constantino C. Tejero

JESUS ENOTEN IS RELATIVELY young yet his art displays a certain fastidious traveled by any learner that succinctly come from someone who has lived long enough.

A graduate of Philippine Women's University Institute of Fine Arts and Design, the artist is presenting only his second solo exhibit, "Mahiwa," five pieces in acrylic and oil on canvas, in the Main Gallery of Nipaco's Artspace at Villa Arkipelago Subdivision, Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

Most of these pieces are dreary or provocative: pseudo-nihilistic and particularly timely for this time of the year, a sentiment's deal, as it were. Murdered in Cenacolo's signature blue accented by red and yellow, the portraits frame a melodramatic facial expression that belies the suffering of the flesh.

Take the bone-weary Black Nazarene devotee in "Debosi." Slumped on the sidewalk, his blood-red shirt inscribed with Jesus Nazareno and the face of the Suffering Christ, he appears to be sleeping, probably taking a respite from the hassle of the procession. But then, as suggested by an empty beer can nearby, this man could also be in a drunken stupor.

In "Buddha," the bald-headed man, smiling presumably in an ignorant manner, is entangled in barbed wire, golden-dotted shorts and a girdle around the distended belly. Despite the word Ang symbol on his arm, however, he looks positively shameful.

Then the viewer is suddenly made aware of the tragedy of the ridiculous man: What stands in for the height of spirituality in his mankind is subverted by the massive bundle of flesh that will surely return to dust.

In "Lamesan" 3, the artist's self-portrait is close-blue highlighted with white hints still contained, even smug. Though rendered in more monochromatic, it is a rather cheerful image.

But this is shockingly subverted by the image of the head and torso of Christ in "Agony," outlined in a line with a sword driven into the mouth and dagger's stuck on the shoulders. This rendered by a magician's trick but it surely looks gory.

Surely the most gruesome is "Kaliua," depicting a crowd of blue-naked women mutilated, burned, contorted, writing away, screaming, weeping, crawling or sprawled on cracked parched earth under a pulsating sky.

"DEBOSYO"

The artist, who is from Cavintan, Southern Samar, says this mural was inspired by the Balangiga Massacre during the Filipino-American War. But we can't make out whether the bulging figures are victims of rape, rape or famine, or protesting women, or whether to be burned at the stake.

It is a powerful image, though, a strong blend of El Greco's "Los Insiendos el Inocentes" and "Guernica" and Goya's "Disasters of War" — and it can stand as a testimony to man's inhumanity to man like any.

The exhibition's title, which translates as "dare," could be interpreted in two ways. If positive a notice for social commentary, you might see these images as depicting the essential dire of society.

But if you choose to be spiritual about it, you might see the images as a reminder that, really, we are nothing but the quintessence of dust.

"ASONT"

Jerde to design new Philippine development

WHAT DO THE MASTER ARCHITECTS I.M. Pei and Arn Adams Jerde have in common?

They've both worked/renovated for their visionary architectural undertakings. We for his reflexions on the abstract lines and fascination for stone and glass, which he abundantly used in such prominents structures as the pyramid of Grand Louvre in Paris, those of China Tower in Hong Kong and Everson Museum of Art in New York; and Jerde for redefining the urban landscape and its "experience metaphors," as related in the 1998 Los Angeles Olympics, the mega complex of Roppongi Hills in Tokyo and Jean Wynn's Bellagio Hotel in Las Vegas.

Pei and Jerde went beyond architectural conventions to create iconic works of art, less static on the ground to the environments where the structures are built, and their economical impact on the immediate communities.

Because of their pioneering spirit, projects by these master architects go beyond the norm; the two architects from Jerde commissioned by Century Properties, the property company in the Philippines to designate real estate developments.

Pei, through his firm Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, designed the architectural for Century's flagship development: this two-tower residential high-rise Rockwell East Forbes in Fort Bonifacio Global City.

Despite the Asian economic crisis in 1997, Century continued on with Rockwell's construction until it was completed three short years from idea. Rockwell inaugurated Rockwell as the best residential building in the Philippines.

"It was (still) a historic achievement not just for the company but also for the Philippine real estate industry," said Ian Lim-Ocfemia And E.B. Antonio, chair of Century Properties. "With such a major groundbreaking project, we knew we should only trust the best architect for the job—I.M. Pei."

A winner of the prestigious Pritzker Architecture Prize, the Chinese-American building Pei has designations/skyscrapers in the United States and across the globe.

Pei's trademark lies in creating every masterpiece from scratch. "He shows little concern with theory," said the culture design and building magazine Architecture Week. "He does not believe architecture must find home to express the times or it should remain isolated from commercial forces."

He said in a speech: "Architects by design investigate the play of volumes in light, explore the mysteries of movement in space, examine the structure that is scale and proportion, and, above all, they search for that special magical clue that is the soul of the place, as no building exists alone."

MODEL of planned Century City in riverfront Subic International School in Makati

URBAN planner and architect Jon Adams Jerde and Ambassador José E.B. Antonio, chair of Century Properties

Jerde

Jerde thinks along the same lines as Pei. "His revolutionary spirit and audacity to transform places into 'experiential environments' where people can gather and experience a sense of community, has paved the way for the creation of new 'human centers,'" Antonio said.

"For that reason we feel motivated our newest revolutionary development in Rockwell Iris, The Arden Partnership, and its team of highly skilled urban planners and renowned architects."

Jerde and the Arden Partnership envisioned are coming to the Philippines this year to transform Century City a P40-billion urban complex, which Century Properties will build on the former site of the International School Manila on Kalayaan Avenue, Makati.

As envisioned by Century Properties and its development partners, Crescent Holdings Limited of Singapore and Prime Holdings, Century City will raise the bar by world-class integrated mixed-use developments.

"Century City will comprise office buildings, residential towers, a five-star hotel, leisure and entertainment centers and one-of-a-kind landscapes, bearing Jerde's placemaking philosophy that adds magnetism to a place and sets the new standard for an iconic development," Antonio added. "Century City will not just attract people, it would make Chinese and Iloilo feel at every time."

From developing retail and restaurants to cinemas, the Arden Partnership's masterminds portfolio now includes residential complexes, hotels, casinos and resorts, office and commercial facilities, transit-oriented mixed-use centers, town centers and entire urban districts. This time takes pride in bringing life to spaces.

Said Jerde: "It is the experience the residents people have for a particular place that attracts more people and more income."

Here again, Century Properties continues to redefine life in Philippine real estate—one that will take shape in the hand of yet another internationally renowned master architect.

FUSIONJA East Forbes, designed by I.M. Pei, is a counterpart 44-storey tall complexes on the best residential buildings in the Philippines.

LANDSCAPE by Fabian de la Rosa

Book gives Fabian de la Rosa his due

"FABIAN DE LA ROSA AND His Times," a collection of essays on the Filipino painter, was recently launched in the manila publication of the Filipino Art Series of Filipinas, Inc.Art, a division of Filipinas Publishing Resource, Inc.

Dr. Jr. Rosa's original piece is Philippine art has been celebrated by his illustrious descendants from Juan and Jr. to Hernandez Philippe, and his famous protégé and nephew, Fernando Amorsolo.

"Fabian de la Rosa and His Times" features articles written and by Jr.'s Rosa himself, as well as essays by Dr. Jr. Ocampo, a painter, a poet, a professor and avid researcher on Philippine history, art and culture; Enrique Alfaro Pilar, art historian and professor at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts; Manuel Oñate, professor of architecture and author and publishing history and culture; and Ana Maria B. Labrador, editor of the book, curator of the UP Vargas Museum and Filipiniana Research Center, and an assistant professor of art and museum studies at UP Diliman.

Jr. la Rosa was the first Filipino director of the UP School of Fine Arts (now the College of Fine Arts), which is celebrating its centenary the year. He was among the last of the generation of artists influenced and taught by Lorenzo Guerrero, Miguel Zaragoza, Ernesto Rivera, Luna and Hidalgo.

In 1934, he started sculpture in earnest by winning the gold medal at the St. Louis Exposition in Missouri for his painting "Planting Rice." In coming the French Filipino artist's epic international recognition after Rivera, Juan and Hidalgo.

"By roughly the look, one can tell artists in the great artist whose numerous contributions to Philippine art has been largely overlooked. If not forgotten altogether," says Philippine-art publisher Gregorio Fernando. "It is our humble contribution to ensure the legacy of this Filipino master from obscure certain oblivion."

"We of the UP Vargas Museum are grateful for another opportunity to work with Filipinos and our friends at Publishing House to honoring Fabian de la Rosa, whose work is now the transition period between the Spanish and American colonial time, to those in Philippine art history that has not yet been thoroughly explored," says Labrador.

Both Tilted and Labrador expressed hope that the book will draw much deserved attention to the genius that is Fabian de la Rosa as well as the very crucial historical phase between the Spanish and American colonial periods during which other artists such as Ramon Peralta and Guillermo Tolentino also made their mark.

Filipiniana, Inc. this summer and one of the most extensive online research facilities on Philippine studies, sells out its FSRC and Jr. services features correspondences on major Philippine artists. Other forthcoming projects include the Collectors Cookbook Series, Great Architects Series and Townscapes Series.

Exhibit on modern Filipino architecture unveiled at National Museum

IN CELEBRATION OF THE NATIONAL Arts Month 2007, the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA), Committee on Architecture and Allied Arts, with the National Museum and University of the Philippines College of Architecture, opened the exhibition "Building Modernity: A Century of Philippine Architecture and Allied Arts." The exhibit runs until May at the National Museum of the Filipino People Gallery in Rizal Park.

The exhibit embodies the heritage and socio-economic history of Filipino life in the manner that evolved into Philippine architecture of the last 100 years. The brought together designers and experts in relation to local architecture that have not recently existed home to the eyes but elements that define architecture, ideologies and sources.

The launch held at the National Museum of the Filipino People, with celebrities comprising of Rehan Philippines, was highly attended by art connoisseurs such as Jaime Laya, former NCCA chair; Corazon Alvina, National Museum director; Andrew Gonzalez, NCCA and National Historical Institute chair; Ben Antolin, CCP president; Jr. Bienvenido Noriega, University of the Philippines president; former first lady Imelda Marcos; and National Artist Edelweiss Amatao Jr.

Architect Cristina Velero-Escalona, head of the NCCA National Committee on Architecture and Allied Arts, is project director of the exhibition.

CORAZON Alvina of the National Museum; National Artist U.P. Sunnyo; architect Maria Cristina P. Torralba, head of the NCAA National Committee on Architecture and Allied Arts; Jaime C. Laya, project director of the exhibit; Imelda Marcos; and NCCA chair Andrew M. Gonzalez

UP PROFESSOR Emilio Duarte, PRU professor Joel Dela, Ford University College of Architecture dean Jojo Mamaghuya, UP professor Rose Lois Mata and architect Angelito Vidalon

Curated by UP professors Immel Lim and Patrick Flores, the exhibit underscores how Philippine architecture assimilated the forces of modernity, transforming the pre-

ANTONIO Tordilla, Ayala Group chair

GERARD Lico, exhibit curator

HESTON Jardin, CCP president

GEMMA Cruz-Araneta, Heritage Conservation Society president

UP PROFESSOR Zeus Salingay and UP College of Architecture assistant Ms. Lira P. Santos

Read about the art of renovation

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW about whipping up a new look for your home is in the Rockwell Special of The new issue of Bible Home & Entertaining.

From changing the atmosphere of rooms and by rearranging furniture old and existing décor to creating new spaces that will cater to the homeowner's needs, the 12-page special is a must-read for those planning on a home renovation project.

The magazine asked four different designers to propose design overhauls for a couple of homes based on varying budgets, and the results are as inspiring as they are informative. There is even an expert report on how and where to get the best loans for renovation.

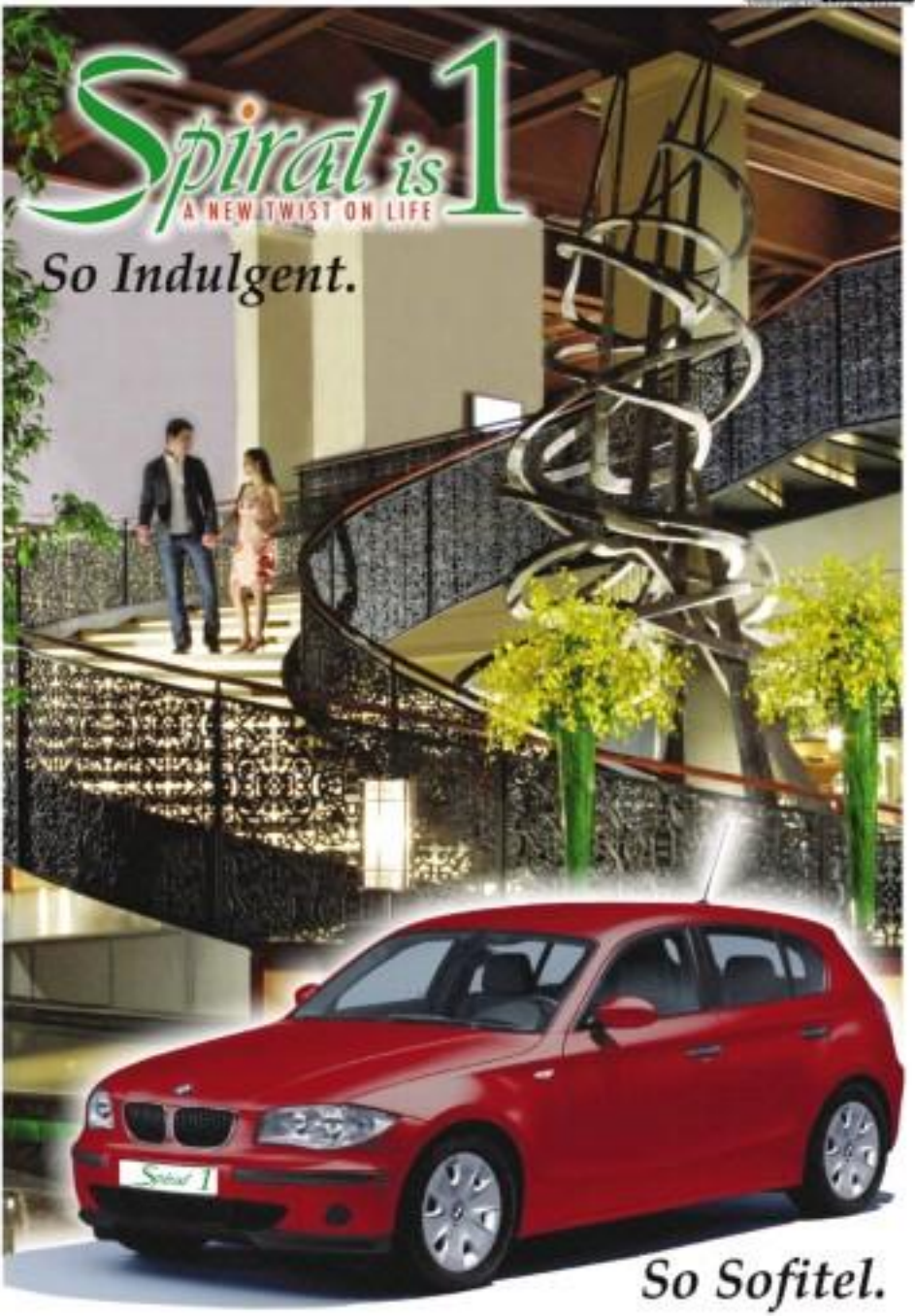
Featured are stylish and sophisticated new homes, including those of two top photographers Joe Lastimosa and Ayie Kotsiopoulos, and a sleek urban condo office in the home of the talkshow host.

Also in this issue are a couple of stories on collectors: the art pieces owned by an architect and how they enhance the beauty of his high-rise abode, and the antiques of two ladies who turned their passion into a business.

Rockwell Executive Asset Buddy Loy Jimenez, Contemporary gardens also take the spotlight in the magazine's feature landscape stylings and high- and low-budget gardens.

Other stories: Shakespearing Palace as a home of history and heritage, and the last hour of a storied house called Bahay Ni Kuya; lavish parties of Filipino elites both private.

Men's shoes is featuring a new look as well.



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ENTERTAINMENT

Lito Ernie G. Velarde

DIETHER OCAMPO

IZA CALZADO

INSIDE

- **Iza Calzado may soon** slug it out in H'wood /I1
- **Diether determined** to win back Kristine /I1
- **'Amazing Race'** castoffs Joyce & Uchenna /H4

Bank while you have fun!

With the many tasks crowding our days, it's easy to forget life's simple pleasures. We should however find time to feel renewed through small, refreshing changes which will not necessarily put our life on hold.

Mom of three, homemaker and interior designer Marivic Perez-Burgos unwinds during weekends with a hobby from her teen years – baking. "You definitely can't rush it. It requires time and patience but I do it because it energizes me."

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2 THE GROOMSMEN
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5 DREAMGIRLS

DASMARIÑAS

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5 ANG CUTE ng INA MO

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4 THE REAPING

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MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

Unexpected pairings in singing tilts

STELLAR TASSHIE IN ESTRELLA

Apart are carefully thought out and planned by auditions applicant. If one popular star can draw crowds, two of them in one production could easily double the pleasure, double the fun—and the profits.

And so in the course of their careers, top stars are paired with each other in expensive productions that turn out to be huge flops/disasters.

But there's another, more unexpected pairing that's also noteworthy in other ways, including similarity and contrast.

Take current "American Idol" finalist Sanjaya Malakar, in the start of the final phase of the competition, he was decided for having the "worst" singing voice in the till. That was when he was compared to another former contestant Jon Hill, William Hung.

They were made two hosts, so indifferent, we thought. William couldn't sing a note to save his life, but fans simply CRAZY dog as much as his stubborn fit.

Then, something quite unexpected happened. Adolescent Jon fell in love with the pouty, 17-year-old singer (she pumped in the competition), and made it possible for him to survive from week to week, despite the judges' most caustic and glum pan-pan-to-ears. So, as of this writing (April 11), Sanjaya has mustered "silver" over as other former singers have fallen into the wayside.

Early in the competition, we noted that young Sanjaya's look and appeal were similar to Michael Jackson's when he, too, was a pimply teenager—and "will before he had his features and complexion altered to look like a

racial mishmash of Diana Ross and Elizabeth Taylor.

These days, most people are seeing the Sanjaya-Michael connection, and citing it as one reason women the young Indian-American is no longer "America's own Idol" candidate joke. Could he possibly survive up to the 16th Best of Three?

Another unexpected random is Philippine Idol's Mau Marcelo and "American Idol's" rejected Jessi sister, Lolisha Jones. They're both cleft, plus-sized, possess powerful voices, and are holders of the first name. Two live in different parts of the world, but when their photos are placed side by side—why, they could be sisters!

The big difference is, Lolisha just sings her best, while Mau sets extraordinarily framed once by designers and stylists to make her look "more fabulous-looking." Also, all she became was a beauty queen, and that detracted from her victory in the Philippine Idol last year.

To her credit, Lolisha will have more of that. Soon, she dresses better more than before, but her clothes never overwhelm her, as Mau's friend fashion consultants and contemporaries did her.

Perhaps Mau can learn from Lolisha's example to be more confident about her talent, so she doesn't feel like she has to resort to looking like a spectacle to keep her public entertained?

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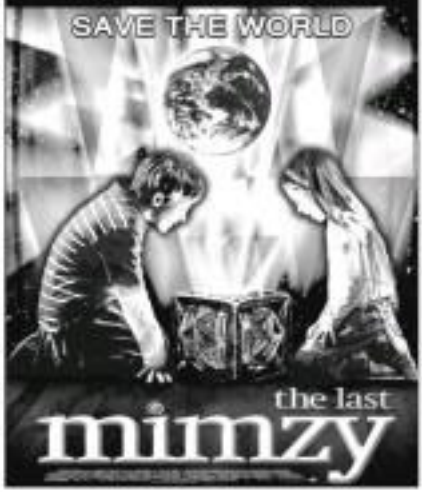

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GB1	FIREHOUSE DOG	THE REAPING		
GB3	STOMP THE YARD	3:D THE REAPING		
	PREMONITION	FIREHOUSE DOG	SUNSHINE	
ATC	1:1 ANG CUTE NG PANDAK	THE REAPING		
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"IT WAS a ride we had to take," the couple says.

Uchenna & Joyce cast off race after 'strategic' move

By Ruth L. Navarra

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

LET'S CHATTER UCHENNA AND JOYCE had their first taste of elimination in the ninth leg of "The Amazing Race Asia" down.

They had taken a risky flight and missed a connection, giving the other teams a half day advantage.

Uchenna reconsidered: "All the other teams had experienced being eliminated. That's why they take less risks. Once we were willing to take."

The couple became on target to survive Season 7 when Joyce willingly shaved her head to win a Fast Forward to All Heads task that would exempt the team from a non-elimination leg.

"We wanted to stay under the radar and not show our strength to the other teams," says Joyce. Taking last flight was a strategic move."

What have you done with your previous winnings?

Joyce: We paid our taxes [and] a lot of debts.

Uchenna: I had no iron this season, so would've given the majority of it to our fertility fund.

So Season 7 you said you were going to try out fertility treatments or adoption. Any update on that?

J: When we get home from this last race, we had our third round of in vitro. If it doesn't work, that's when we're going to adopt.

U: We've been [recording] the process... and we'll probably publish it on our website.

You got along easily with the other teams. Would you have yielded any of your friends?

J: No.

U: We're very competitive.

How did you find Charis and Mirna?

J: Let's just say they were not our favorite team. They were very loud.

U: The way they spoke to cricket agents, taxi drivers and the locals was just appalling. And others they don't get what they need, they cry.

J: Actually it's just Mirna. Charis's very sweet—with a loud voice.

Who's your favorite team?

J: Jessie and Candice. We also liked Oswald and Emma a lot.

How did the trip to Namibia, Tanzania affect you?

U: It affected us because the story behind the slave trade had affected a lot of lives. So some of them, it was the last time they saw home before sailing up to different parts of the world, including the US. Moments like those make you sooo away from the race and realize where you are.

J: It's amazing what men can put their fellow men through.

What was the most memorable place for you?

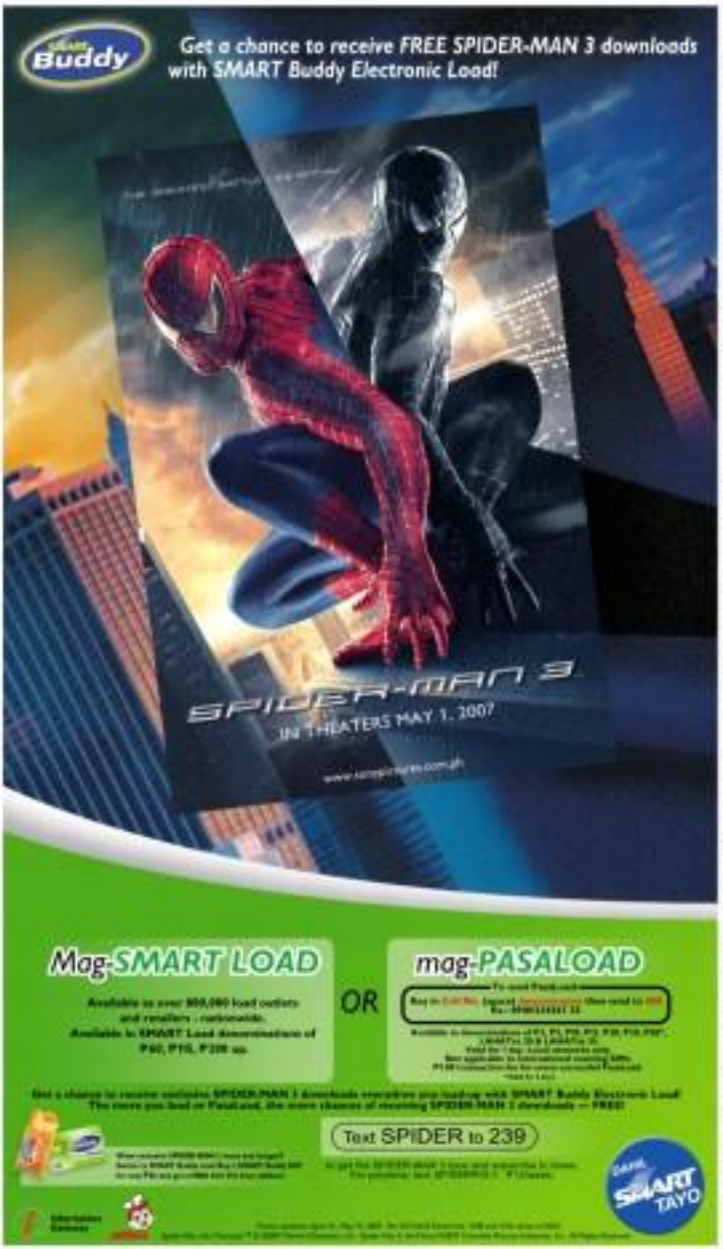
U: My favorite experience is still Namibia. I had met the Himba and [also] the Bushmen [Ju/'hoansi] people and then, I was able to jump with them. They were so precious.

Does appreciating the places you go to threaten to kill the game?

U: That's a very fine balance that we have to walk. What keeps me back to reality is another team that runs by you without even looking at the environment.

J: That's what is amazing about "The Amazing Race." It's not just about winning the money but being able to experience the world.

The "Amazing Race: All-Stars" airs every Monday, 9 p.m. on ABS.



ENTERTAINMENT

Iza may soon be slugging it out in H'wood

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

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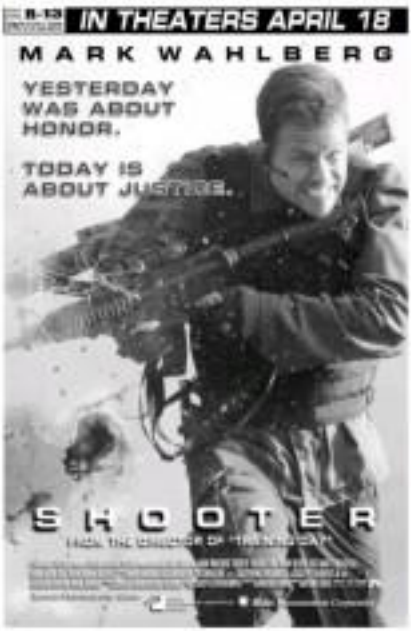

Iza may soon be slugging it out . . .

From page 1

to go international."

Cabardo, he said, could "very well be our Penélope Cruz."

The filmmaker pointed out that, apart from the actress' exotic beauty, she also had a strong sense of professionalism. Plus, he said, "Iza never lets her diva's acting, she becomes the character. She can compete in the world arena."

On the set of GMA films' horror flick, "Onjin," top billed by Judy Ann Santos and Jolina Magdangal and directed by Topel Lee, Cabardo demonstrated when Cold of Lusianas' wish to cast her in "The Echo."

Flustered

"I am extremely flustered, though I don't want to get my hopes up," she said. "My biggest problem is that I don't have a SAG [Screen Actors' Guild] card. I'm not sure if SAG has a local affiliate—I don't know how to go about it."

But if allowed to reprise the role of the abused wife Alexa in "The Echo," she vowed to work as hard as she had done on the original feature film. Cabardo won an Urian Best Supporting Actress for "Sigaw" in 2005.

Good luck

"That was terrible (at) also of good luck; but it's a wonderful tumbay," she enthused.

To prepare for "Sigaw," she revealed, "I watched a lot of movies on battered women, like 'Enough,' starring Jennifer Lopez. I also had a chat with someone who was hiding from her partner."

She remembered that she had "made a point to study hard" every time actress-husband Jaime Y. Jalen was arrested. "It helped that our location was an abandoned building in Bonifacio," she said. "The vibe of that place was sad and eerie."

Visionary

She was proud that "a small film from the Philippines is now going places," she said. "Even if it don't land a part in 'The Echo,' it is happy because finally-mind people may go to watch on movies."

She wasn't surprised that Lorenzo, who also directed her in a romantic-suspense-cal short, is making waves abroad. "He's a visionary," Cabardo said.

Diet: I'll win ...

From page 1

(Maybe then) I should also find the right person for me."

He admitted that it wasn't easy for him to survive as Ubi B man of mind. "I felt so pressured—to marry him, that I couldn't focus on work," he recounted. "I tried going out to find someone else, but that only served to convince me that 'He is the one.'"

The couple went to a controversial civil ceremony in 2004, only to file for annulment less than a month later. They reconciled hastily then broke-up again.

Unprepared

Why did Robbie leave? "I guess it was difficult for her to adapt, just to married life," explained Jimbon.

He seemed unprepared for the tough stretches of their relationship, he noted. "In bodies we are stubborn friendship we had still, we decided to take a breather."

As for the annulment case, Jimbon would rather not discuss the "delicate" subject. "Other people just got to indeed," he said. "and it's not fair to them, to use all our linds."

(I.S. Mario "Bonnie" premieres on Apr 6.23.

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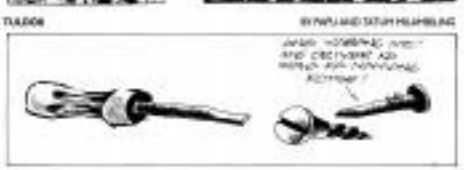
ATOMIC ANEW WEEKLY — BY LYNN GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN MANALANSAN

BIKO MACHINE — BY RAOUL AGRERA

MAKABUGSMOS — BY JOHNNE TEJADA

TULDOK — BY PAPU AND TATUH HILARIBILANG



BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

	2	6						
	7	1		6	9		8	3
				5	2		7	6
	1	4	3		5			
	3	2				8	5	
			2		6	9	3	
7	6		5	2				
2	4		8	1		5	6	
						7	4	

Difficulty Level ★

HOW TO PLAY
(SU DOKU)

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	1	8	7	3	6	2	3	5
7	6	2	8	5	3	4	9	1
5	9	3	4	2	1	8	7	6
3	2	1	5	4	9	6	8	7
9	8	7	6	1	2	5	4	3
6	5	4	3	7	8	9	1	2
8	4	6	2	3	7	1	5	9
1	7	5	9	6	4	3	2	8
2	3	9	1	8	5	7	6	4

★★★★★

SHANG CINEPLEX

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3 SUNSHINE
2 THE REAPING
4 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES
PREMIERE THEATRE
MISS POTTER

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No to anorexia!

AMERICA FERRERA

NEW YORK—SHE MAY SHOP A SIZE 10 weight here and there, but "Ugly Betty" star America Ferrera says she will never become a Hollywood waif.

"There are times when I go to the gym and really try," she admits, her tummy still with W magazine in its May issue. "I gain a pound. I lose a pound. But I think I've developed a really good sense of where I'm doing something for myself as opposed to when I'm doing something because of other people's expectations of you." She continues: "And even if I seemed to be anorexic, I just don't have what it takes. After four hours of being anorexic, it's like this. It's been four whole hours! Feed me!" AP

CHEER FACTOR

HOT SUMMER, COOL EVENT

Twenty-four finalists clad in ocean wear-inspired bikinis will storm to the beat of marathon reggae music during the finals night of "Manalone Bikini Summit: Search Underground" on Apr 21, 8:30 p.m., at the MRC Tent, in The Fort, Taguig. Admission tickets are available at all Manalone branches until Apr 20. In photo are Ai Ketong, right, and Dariah Abdon, two of the contenders.

POWER PLANT

MISS POTTER	SUNSHINE	FIREHOUSE DOG
	TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	THE REAPING

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

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